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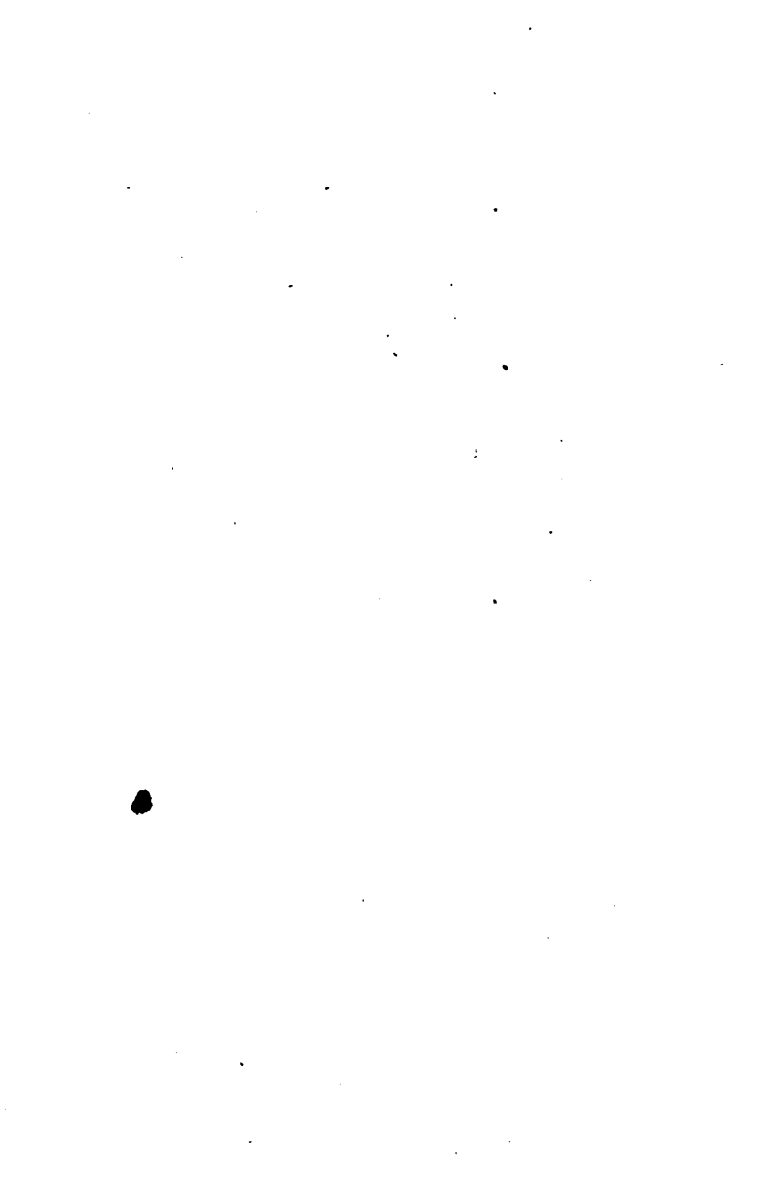
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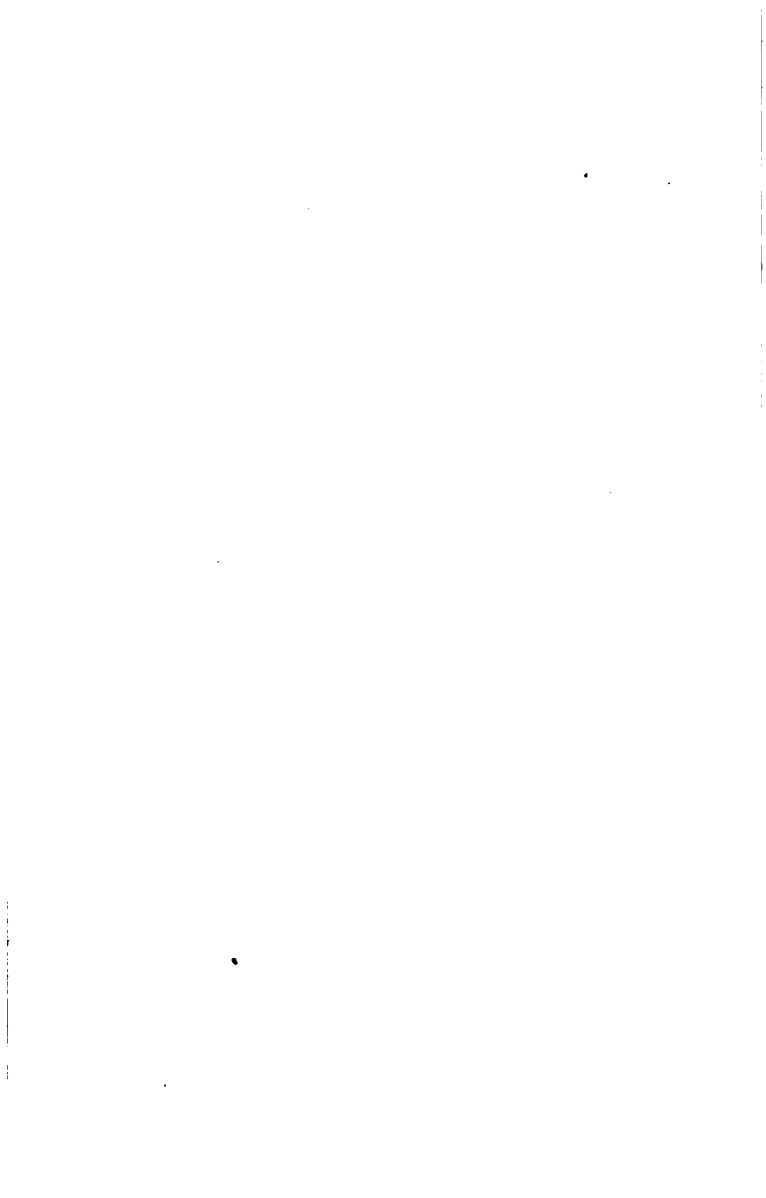
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'THE KING WAS HIS INTERPRETER.'...

OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY
OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND.

BY THE VERY REV. RICHARD MURRAY, D. D.
DEAN OF ARDAGH,

AND AUTHOR OF THE "INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE APOCALYPSE,"
"LESSONS ON THE CHURCH CATECHISM," AND
"SERMONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS."

"Whatever Columba was himself, we know of him for certain, that he left successors, renowned for continence, love of God, and regular observance, practising such works of charity and piety as they could learn from the PROPHETICAL, EVANGELICAL AND APOSTOLIC WRITINGS."—*Bede*.



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TO ONE

“ WHO LOVETH OUR NATION,”

AND WHO UNITES THE DIGNITY OF BRITISH NOBILITY

WITH THE SIMPLICITY AND GODLY SINCERITY

OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN ;—

THE DOWAGER DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT;—

THIS LITTLE BOOK

IS INSCRIBED AS A SMALL TOKEN OF RESPECT AND

GRATITUDE, BY HER GRACE'S MOST HUMBLE

AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

DEANERY HOUSE, EDGEWORTHSTOWN,

JULY 18, 1840.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE object which the compiler of the following pages had in view, was simply to meet BY HISTORICAL FACTS the popular errors of the day, respecting the Irish branch of our apostolic church ; knowing that ‘ the spirit of the age ’ would not endure a more elaborate treatise on the subject.



P R E F A C E.

PERMISSION to prefix a few remarks to this volume may well be esteemed a privilege, by one who ardently desires to see the rich vine of the Lord's planting in Ireland, rescued alike from the spoilers that rob, and from the scorn-ers that trample it.

One of the strangest delusions of the present day is that relating to the date and circumstances of our early Christian church: we find an impression widely prevailing, that Augustine introduced into England that light of the gospel which he, in fact, was sent from Rome to darken, while the assertion that a pure and scriptural church existed in Ireland, even before her sister island was so favoured, is frequently treated as a mere invention, wild as the chronological assumptions of the Chinese. If the

subject were closely investigated, we should find an immense majority of otherwise well-informed Protestants possessed with the notion that we are a kind of off-set from the Romish see; unvisited by a clear revelation of the gospel until, in the sixteenth century, the brilliant torch that Martin Luther elevated in Germany shot a ray athwart the intervening space, and shewed these lands what had hitherto lay hidden beneath the shadows of Popery. Our blessed Reformers knew better: and we, as the reviving Protestantism of the country sends us back to their long-neglected pages, are acquiring some insight into the matter: we are beginning to comprehend, or rather to admit the fact, that the Church of Christ in England, driven into the mountain fastnesses of Wales, slowly retreated before the overpowering flood of Papal insolence and oppression, and there dwelt in the wilderness for many a generation, until God was pleased to raise up first a Wickliff to sound the trumpet, and then, in rapid succession, to warm many a faithful heart, and to nerve many a resolute hand, in the work of collecting together the scattered stones, and rebuilding both the walls and the temple, of our national Zion.

In Ireland, the work was, from its commencement, more marked, and more extraordinary, than in any other part of the British dominions. It has been in a peculiar manner the scene of morning splendour, of a dark and stormy noon, and now, at evening time, of a broad and beautiful light, slowly but widely spreading, and striking with a sublime effect its golden rays on the black masses of antagonist clouds, which the breath of the Lord God is rolling back from her agitated sky. Yet, notwithstanding the mass of evidence always within reach of the student, and from which a portion has been culled by the author of these "Outlines," it is continually asserted on the one side, and scarcely ever contradicted on the other, that the Gospel was first preached in Ireland by Romish delegates; the inference of course is, that the primitive Church of Ireland being popish, ecclesiastical rights of every description are vested in the priests of that system. This error tells with powerful effect not only among the people of their own communion, but on many protestants, who are deluded into a recognition of claims wholly unfounded in justice, wholly unsupported by facts, and which need only a glance into authentic history utterly to disprove them;

shewing at the same time that St. Patrick, who is so confidently claimed as a son and an apostle of the Romish See, was no less opposed to it in doctrine, in practice, and in his teaching, than is now a M'Ghee, or any other of the dauntless champions of Protestantism whom Ireland at this day sends forth, as she did her missionaries of old, to kindle or to fan the flame of pure Christianity among neighbouring nations.

Again ; innumerable persons are persuaded to credit the enemy's frequent assertion, that the existence of two churches in Ireland at this day is owing to the partial introduction of Protestantism at the Reformation : whereas the division took place in the twelfth century, when the Romish bishop, not being able, as he hoped, to come in peaceably and obtain the kingdom by flatteries, effected a compulsory subjection to his sway, by the military prowess of his well-beloved son, Henry II.

As a fair deduction from the two foregoing misstatements, we often hear the argument advanced, ' Make Ireland what she originally was, Popish, do away with your Protestant establishment, and let the religion of the majority be the established religion of the land,

you will then see what she has so long been a stranger to, unanimity and peace.' Even admitting the premises to be as true and just as they are false and vain, the conclusion is negatived by actual experience. The experiment was tried, and that too under the advantageous circumstance of England being equally Popish with her sister island; but so far from lulling to rest the billows of her turbulent population, they never raged and foamed, and dashed themselves one against the other with such incessant violence, as during the supremacy of Rome in the land.

Again, we are told, and we sometimes yield at least a silent acquiescence to the remark, that the Established Church in Ireland is too rich, she has waxed fat, and has therefore kicked; curtail her abundant wealth, and the happiest effects will follow. A perusal of these outlines of her history, brief as they are, will suffice to shew the fallacy of such logic. Until within the last fifty years, the Irish church has been the poorest on the face of the earth; and to the evil consequences of such an impoverished state, ample testimony is borne by statesmen and historians, writing at the very period when, if there were any truth in the maxim, matters

would have flourished to the heart's content of all who wished her well. It is only since this beggarly state underwent a change to something like an adequate provision, that the church has risen into activity and usefulness. We cannot tax her enemies with inconsistency when they strive to persuade us that it would be a good deed to starve and fetter her once more into a state of quiescence : but it is passing strange that her friends should lend a patient ear to counsel, which, to say the least of it, pays a very poor compliment to the understandings it so seeks to mystify.

The volume now presented to the Catholic Church of Ireland, will assist to rectify some of these mistakes ; it contains a brief but comprehensive and satisfying sketch, from the pen of one, whose privilege it has been to stand forward in the conflict which its faithful ministers have of late years been called upon to sustain, against the unseen rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, against persecution, affliction, and every variety of suffering that the restraining power of laws yet unrepealed would permit their oppressors to inflict upon them. They have wielded the weapons of their warfare,

which are not carnal but spiritual; and while by their means, in the strength of the Lord, pulling down to a greater extent than is generally supposed the strong-holds of Antichrist, they have taken patiently, if not joyfully, the invasion of their rights, the extinction of their bishoprics, the spoiling of their goods, and the exposure of their lives to the assassin's knife, seeing that through their persecutions the word of God more mightily grows and prevails, among those who are, in truth, the children of a race distinguished of God above most others, by the strength and beauty of the church that he planted among them.

There is one point in this history that will come with the effect of a strange surprise on many who already admit the existence and the glory of that early Irish church: I mean, the actual conforming of the whole country, priests and people, to the reformed ritual in the reign of Elizabeth. To this I would earnestly draw the notice of every reader, requesting him deeply to ponder on the means whereby this rekindling lamp was again quenched in the blackness of darkness.

This is not a volume to be read, laid aside, and forgotten: neither are the facts that it

shews forth to be merely added to the treasury of historical knowledge in the reader's mind. The history of the past, as regards the Catholic Church in Ireland, is a light held up whereby to contemplate her present position, whereby to arm for her defence, and to hasten to her rescue from impending peril. The loved and honoured friend to whose persevering research we are indebted for this book, never dreamed of it as a mere literary, or learned production; a volume added to ecclesiastical history in general; but as an exercise of those holy functions that call upon him to put the brethren in remembrance of things, the oblivion or neglect of which has gone nigh to occasion the removal of their candlestick out of its place. Its pages contain a fearful record; and happy will they be who rise from their perusal with a fixed purpose to seek and inquire how they, individually, may help forward the cause of Christ, in a nation and a church so signally marked out by his providential dispensations. The blessing of many a soul now ready to perish will come upon them, who stretch forth a hand to aid their struggles out of the net that Popery, working by such instruments as the godless spirit of the age too readily furnishes

her with, is spreading over her victim ; and he who has made this timely disclosure of unknown or forgotten facts, will rejoice even as one that findeth great spoils, when he sees “ that his labour has not been in vain in the Lord.”

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

Blackheath, July, 1840.

ERRATA.

Page 20.	For <i>Stone</i> ,	read <i>Slane</i> .
21.	— <i>Dublin</i> ,	— DUBLIN.
29.	— <i>the</i> ,	— <i>me</i> .
61.	— <i>possession</i>	— <i>profession</i> .

HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction of Christianity into Ireland—Enmity of the Irish to every thing connected with Rome—Palladius—St. Patrick—Number of Bishops in Ireland—Hereditary Succession in the Irish Church—Agreement of the Ancient Liturgy with the Greek Church—Differed materially from the Romish—The Doctrines of the Irish Church decidedly opposed to Romish novelties—The Seven Churches and Round Towers—The Apostolic Succession of the Irish Bishops.

THE gospel of Jesus Christ appears to have been preached in Ireland at a very early period : so early indeed that that country is supposed to have been visited by the disciples of Christ within one hundred years after the crucifixion. In the reign of Con, in the second century, Ireland sent forth the famous St. Cathalgus, to preach the doctrines of Christ, who became afterwards

the bishop and patron of Tarentum in Italy. In the next age, Cormac, an Irish prince and a celebrated legislator, was converted to Christianity, and died in the faith. St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, A. D. 100, mentions the existence of churches among the Celtic nations;¹ but the earliest writer, who affords the most direct proof of the probable existence of one in Ireland, is Tertullian, one of the Latin Fathers, who wrote about the year 200. He asserts, in his book, ‘Adversus Judæos, c. 7,’ ‘That those parts of the British *Isles* which were unapproached by the Romans, were yet subject to Christ.’ The allusion to Ireland is here manifest, from the use of the plural noun. In the fourth century, several churches had been founded and colleges opened in Ireland, particularly that of Heber or Iber, at Beglire in Leinster, ‘where Heber instructed great numbers of Irish, as well as foreigners, in sacred and polite letters.’

St. Albe, also an Irish prelate, after having preached throughout Ireland, founded his church and school at Emely or Emly. Irish ecclesiastics were spoken of as having visited other parts

¹ Lib. 1, c. 2, 3.

² Usher, Primor. p. 801.

of Europe before the fourth century, particularly St. Dermot and St. Liberias, who were succeeded by Ailbe, Kiaran, Declan, and Ibarus, in the work of disseminating the gospel. Again, Ireland afforded the terrified British clergy a secure asylum from the Dioclesian persecution, in 303. And as a proof that education had made considerable progress in Ireland, we are distinctly informed by St. Jerome and others, that the celebrated Celestius, so well known afterwards as the bold follower of Pelagius, the arch-heretic, was by birth an Irishman; and three letters to his parents are extant, which demonstrate that he had received an early Christian education in that country. These epistles not only imply that his parents were Christians, but that there must have existed an extensive community of them in a country where such a writer could have been instructed, and such letters at all understood. They were written, (says Moore, in his History of Ireland,) 'in the form, as we are told, of little books, and full of such piety, as to make them necessary to all who love God.' Their date is A. D. 369; and they were written, I need scarcely remark, previously to the falling of Celestius into his grievous errors, and sixty-

two years before the arrival of St. Patrick ; but they evidently imply a full reception of Christianity into Ireland at a much earlier period.¹

We learn from Dr. O'Halloran, a distinguished Roman Catholic antiquary, that at the period of which we are now speaking, and when Christianity was making such rapid progress in Ireland, 'a most uncompromising enmity existed in the minds of the Irish people against every thing connected with Rome;' it would therefore be unreasonable to suppose, that it was from Rome they received that instruction which broke down their heathen superstitions, dissolved their former system of religion, and produced such an important revolution in the minds of all, as ultimately to lead them, with one consent, to profess themselves Christians. At this early period also, when the contest was carried on between the eastern and western churches, the converts had imbibed all those prejudices which in after ages manifested themselves so strongly in favour of the eastern customs, and which were, at the same time, so decidedly opposed to the Roman mode of the tonsure, and keeping of Easter; and when St.

¹ St. Jerome, speaking of this Celestius; says, '*He was made fat with Irish flummery.*'

Patrick, on his arrival in the land, wished to exercise some kind of jurisdiction over the churches, he was told by St. Iber, that 'they never acknowledged the supremacy of a foreigner,' and therefore protested against his claims.¹

PALLADIUS—THE FIRST MISSIONARY FROM THE
SEE OF ROME.

The account of this mission is given in Prosper's Chronicle,² and the manner in which it is mentioned is peculiarly striking: the words are these—'Ad Scotus in Christo credentes, ordinatus a Papa Celestino Palladius, primus episcopus mittitur, sed non recte.' 'Palladius, appointed first bishop by Pope Celestine, is sent to the Scoti (or Irish) believing in Christ, but not rightly.' The mission totally failed: after remaining a few months, or as some say only three weeks in the country, Palladius was

¹ This account is given by the biographer of St. Columkille, whose virulence against Protestants and Protestantism justifies him from the charge of partiality to an opinion which states so fully that the church of his native country rejected with disdain all foreign interference.

² Bass. et Antioch Coss.

obliged to retire, and died in Scotland in the January following.

The question may now be fairly asked, Why were the labours of Palladius to so little effect, and his stay so short in Ireland? Nennius, a Roman Catholic writer, drily observes, 'that no man can receive any thing upon earth, unless it be given him from heaven.' Probus, another Roman Catholic writer, remarks, 'the Irish were wild and barbarous, and would not receive the doctrines of Palladius.' Joceline, the biographer of St. Patrick, says, 'Because they would not believe his preaching, but most obstinately opposed him, Palladius departed their country.'

All these were silly evasions of the truth. Palladius was an intruder into a church which was complete and independent. The Irish clergy and people of that day would not listen to his foreign commission, nor obey his extra-national jurisdiction, and therefore they rejected the pope and his delegate; and such is the tenor of our ecclesiastical history from the second to the twelfth century.

Hume, whose indifference to all religion, renders him at least an unprejudiced witness, corroborates the account here given of the early

independence of the Irish church. ‘The Irish (says this historian) followed the doctrines of their first teachers, and never (at the period alluded to) acknowledged any subjection to the see of Rome.’¹

Having thus briefly, but I should hope sufficiently, proved the early introduction of Christianity into Ireland, and that not by Romish missionaries, I shall now endeavour to produce those authorities, which in my mind not only point out, but substantiate, the fact of its eastern origin.

Mr. Grose, in his introduction to the *Monastic Antiquities*, states, ‘that Polycarp sent missionaries to spread the gospel, in the western and northern parts of Europe, who settled episcopacy, and gave a pure and uncorrupted ritual to their converts. Their liturgy agreed with the Greek; and the religion of the Irish continued, for ten centuries, different from that of Rome, which is a strong evidence of our receiving the gospel, *not* from Roman but from Greek missionaries.’

Dr. O’Halloran, who has been already mentioned, expresses his opinion on the same sub-

¹ Hume, Henry II.

ject in the following words :—‘ I strongly suspect that by Asiatic or African missionaries, or through them by Spanish ones, were our ancestors instructed in Christianity, because they rigidly adhered to their customs, as to tonsure and the time of Easter. CERTAIN IT IS THAT PATRICK FOUND AN HIERARCHY ESTABLISHED IN IRELAND.’

ST. PATRICK.

‘ It has been assumed with much confidence (says the late Dr. Phelan) by Roman Catholic writers, that the primitive church of Ireland was a branch of the papacy, and until very lately our antiquaries were unanimous in ascribing the origin of the Irish church to a mission from Rome, under St. Patrick; but the opinion rested, I should say, on no sufficient authority. The documents usually quoted in its support, were, for the most part, of a date comparatively recent; they abounded in anachronisms, contradictions, and such an extravagant profusion of miracles, as would make a general law the most miraculous thing in nature.¹

¹ Cardinal Valerio tells us, it was customary with the monks to exercise their scholars in composition, by proposing the usual

‘Struck with those circumstances, the late Dr. Ledwich, a man of taste, sagacity, and information, boldly denied the existence of St. Patrick. He has been answered by three Roman ecclesiastics, Doctors O’Connor, Milner, and Lanigan, all men of great erudition, and all deeply sensible of the importance of the question to the cause of their church.’

‘I now propose (continues Dr. Phelan) to

topics to them—the *lives and martyrdom of saints*, popular songs, and more commonly the suggestions of their own fancy, were the ground-work of their amplifications. The best of these were laid by, and after some years produced as genuine works.

There is a curious anecdote in Mr. Warton, that bears on this point. ‘About the year 1380, flourished Gilbert de Stone, a learned ecclesiastic, and good Latin writer. The monks of Holywell, in Flintshire, applied to him to write the life of their patron saint. Stone asked for materials; he was answered there were none: upon which he said he could execute the work without materials, and would write them a most excellent legend, after the manner of the legend of Thomas à Becket. By such juvenile monkish exercises, lives of St. Patrick multiplied amazingly. When Joceline sat down to compose his life, he found sixty-four biographers had preceded him in his work. All, with the exception of four, were destroyed in the Norwegian invasion. From these, he tells us, he selected such facts as deserved belief. The following are some of the miracles which our author thinks credible: St. Patrick, while an infant, brought a new river from the earth, which cured the blind; he produced fire from ice; he raised his nurse from the dead; he expelled a devil from a heifer; and changed water into honey. These were but the infant sports of this wonder-working saint.’

shew, that Ledwich and his opponents have divided the truth between them,—with the latter *I maintain the existence of St. Patrick*,—with the former *I deny his Roman mission*. To establish this point, it will be necessary to review two classes of authorities; the one, Romish documents, in which, as Ledwich observed, the name of Patrick is suspiciously omitted; the other, Irish documents, which have been adduced on the opposite side, and which, as they are decisive for the existence of our saint, so, as I hope to prove, they are equally decisive against his *Roman mission*.’

ROMISH DOCUMENTS.

Patrick is not mentioned in the Chronicle of Prosper. Prosper published his Chronicle many years after the time of Patrick. He was disposed to do full justice to the spiritual achievements of the pontiff, yet he does not mention Patrick. Palladius, as I said before, came to Ireland, staid a few weeks, built three chapels, and ran away; but because Palladius was sent by Celestine, Prosper has commemorated the brief and ignoble effort. On the other hand, when Prosper published the last edition of

his Chronicles, Patrick had been twenty-three years in Ireland, and his ministry had been blessed with the most signal success. What could have been the reason that he was omitted by Prosper ?

The Venerable Bede agrees with Prosper in the mention of Palladius, and the omission of Patrick. Bede was strongly attached to the see of Rome, and though he speaks in liberal and grateful terms of the Irish, he seldom forgets to qualify his praise by some slight censure on their schismatical discipline.

THE TESTIMONIES OF IRISH WRITERS, ESPECIALLY THE CONFESSION OF PATRICK HIMSELF.

We learn from this document, ‘ that Patrick was born in Britain, and educated in Gaul; that some time after his return home he felt an impulse to preach the gospel in Ireland; that he was consecrated at home, and that he proceeded immediately to the scene of his ministry. During the remainder of his life, he considered himself fixed in Ireland by the inviolable bonds of duty; but occasionally the high resolves of the apostle were weakened by the natural yearnings of the man. I wished, he says, to go

to Britain, my native country, and to my parents ; nay, also to go to Gaul, to visit my brethren, and to see the face of the holy ones of my Lord ; God knows I wished it very much ; but I was detained by the Spirit, denouncing to me, that if I did so, I should be regarded as an offender. I fear to lose the labours which I have sustained ; yet not I, but the Lord Christ, who has commanded me to abide for the remainder of my life with those among whom I have come.' He desires to visit Britain and his parents,—Gaul and his spiritual brethren ; but of Italy or the Pope, there is no mention.

The elder Cumian, the disciple and biographer of Columba, who wrote at the close of the sixth, or the beginning of the seventh century, calls Patrick *the first apostle of Ireland*. Thus it appears, that while the Papal writers make Palladius the *first* apostle, and take no notice of Patrick, the Irish make Patrick the *first*, and take no notice of Palladius.

The hymn of Fiech, of the same antiquity, also opposes the Roman hypothesis. In the first four Stanzas we have the parentage of the apostle, his captivity and flight from Ireland ; then the story proceeds as follows :—

5.

He traversed the whole of Albion,
He crossed the sea ; it was a happy voyage ;
And he took up his abode with German,
Far away to the south of Armorica,

6.

Among the isles of the Tuscan sea.
There he abode, as I pronounce.
He studied the canons with German ;
Thus it is that the churches testify :

7.

To the land of Erin he returned,
The angels of God inviting him ;
Often had he seen in visions,
That he should come once more to Erin.

‘ Here the route of the apostle is traced for us with the accuracy of a map,—from Ireland, through Britain, across the channel, through Armorica, to the south east corner of Gaul, on the coast of which are situated Lerius, and some other islands, the seats in those days of collegiate institutions. When his studies are concluded, he is brought back to Ireland, and through the sequel of the poem he is represented as continuing there for the remainder of his life. Through the whole piece, Italy is omitted, and in a narrative so orderly and circumstantial as this is, *omission* is equivalent to exclusion.’

I now come to the Cottonian MS. This very curious and important document concurs entirely with the hymn of Fiech. It makes him a student of Leriis. It says that the Bishops German and Lupus nurtured him in sacred literature; that they ordained him, and made him the chief bishop of their school among the Irish and Britons.

‘ On the subject of the Roman mission of Patrick, these documents maintain a profound and *eloquent* silence,—a direct contradiction to the hypothesis we cannot expect from them, without ascribing to their authors the gift of prophecy; but they do what is equivalent,—they *leave no room for it*. They give us all the particulars of which we could reasonably expect to be informed; they tell us both the place of his birth and education; they state who instructed him, who ordained him, who sent him to preach in Ireland, and finally they shew, that after the commencement of his ministry, he never left the island. On the other hand, it has appeared, that the adherents of Rome are as silent concerning Patrick as Patrick and his disciples are with respect to Rome.’

How, then, is the Roman hypothesis sustained by the learned and zealous writers of

whom I speak ? They take refuge in those obscure and recent legends which they are ashamed to quote, when maintaining the existence of Patrick, and which on every other occasion they reject with a contempt as undisguised as it is merited ; and yet after all they cannot agree. Drs. Milner and O'Connor assert, that Patrick was ordained by Celestine ; Dr. Lanigan, after, as he declares, the labour and close application of many years, after having collated every tract and document that he could meet with, gives the ordination to an unknown bishop of an unknown place.

Again, Dr. O'Connor thinks himself very safe, when he states that Patrick was not at Rome earlier than the year 402, but Dr. Lanigan will not allow him to have been there for 29 years after.

Still further, Dr. Milner says, that in the year 461, Patrick went to Rome to render an account of his ministry to the Pope ; the Irishmen, more candid or more wary than their fellow-labourer, reject the account as ' A fable.' In fine, except upon the one indispensable point, these learned men oppose each other, with as little ceremony as they controvert Dr. Ledwich, and in that particular they reverse

the natural order of evidence—they assume that Patrick *must have had* a commission from Rome, and then they conjecture *when* and *how* he obtained it. Instead of deriving their hypothesis from facts, they rest their facts upon an hypothesis.¹

A further and striking proof of the eastern

¹ St. Patrick, according to Archbishop Usher, was a native of North Britain, being born in the year 372. He was the son of a deacon and the grandson of a priest. When he was sixteen years of age, he was taken captive by some Irish pirates, and brought to Ireland. Here he continued six years, discharging the most servile offices, but having at length effected his escape, he returned to his native country, having, during his captivity, been converted to the faith of Christ, and having made himself well acquainted with the language and manners of the people of Ireland. From this period he is said to have had an intense desire to be employed as a missionary in Ireland. To prepare himself for this purpose, we are told that he passed into France, the very country from which, in all probability, the gospel was originally sent to Ireland, and spent some years under the tuition of St. Martin, bishop of Tours, who ordained him a deacon; he was made a presbyter by Germanus, bishop of Auxerre. After that, he spent some time among the canons of the Lateran church, and then took up his residence among a colony of monks in the Tuscan sea. At this period of his life, his former desire for the spiritual instruction of the Irish seems to have revived with increased ardour; he preached in Britain for some time with success, and from thence passed over to Ireland, and became one of the most successful missionaries that ever appeared in the land of Erin. Such appears to be the simple outline of the history of our Irish apostle, divested of a mist of legendary lore, in which his threescore biographers have enveloped him.

and, consequently, the anti-Romish origin of the Irish church, appears to be the great multiplication of bishops in Ireland, where they changed and multiplied them at pleasure. In like manner, we read that St. Basil, in the fourth century, had fifty rural bishops in his diocese;¹ and that there were five hundred sees in the six African provinces.² This rule of the Irish church occasioned great animosity on the part of Rome. Anselm complains bitterly, that ‘our bishops every where were elected and consecrated without a title, and by *one* bishop instead of three, which was according to the Roman plan.’³ No objection can be made to the testimony of St. Bernard and Anselm on this head, being Romanists themselves; but the truth of it does not depend on their statements alone. Virgil and seven Irish bishops went forth on a mission together to Germany in the middle of the eighth century.⁴

In the seventh century they swarmed in Britain, as may be seen from Bede; in fact, the churches in Scotland and the north of England were regularly supplied with bishops and presbyters from the Irish church, and this was become

¹ See Greg. Naz. car. 2.

² Bingham, b. ix. c. 8.

³ Usher's Sylloq. p. 96.

⁴ Ibid. p. 51.

so general that there could not be found three Romish bishops to consecrate Wilfred—all being of Irish consecration and natives of Ireland.

In 670, Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, decreed that they who were consecrated by Irish or British bishops should be confirmed anew by a Catholic one.

The fifth canon of the council of Ceale-hyth, in section 16, requires ‘that none of Irish extraction be permitted to usurp to himself the sacred ministry, in any one’s diocese ; nor let it be allowed such an one to touch any thing which belongs to those of the holy order ; nor to receive any thing from them in baptism, or in the celebration of the mass ; or that they administer the eucharist to the people, because we are not certain *how* or by *whom* they were ordained. We know how it is enjoined in the canons, that no bishop or presbyter invade the parish of another, without the bishop’s consent, so much the rather should we refuse to receive the sacred ministrations from other nations, where there is no such order as that of metropolitans,¹ nor any regard paid to other orders.’

¹ There were no archbishops in the primitive Irish church, the chief bishop was called Primate ; nor had they a hierarchy formed on the model of the Romish plan.

Here we can trace, by collecting and comparing these facts, the steps taken by the ever-watchful jealousy of the church of Rome to supplant the Irish church, which had taken so deep a root at this time in England, and which was extending its influence to so many different parts of Europe.

The fears of the Saxons were soon communicated to the continental clergy. The forty-second canon of Chalons, in section 13, forbids certain 'Irishmen who gave themselves out to be bishops, to ordain priests or deacons without the consent of the ordinary.' The same year the council of Aix La Chapelle observes 'that in some places there were Irish, who called themselves bishops, and ordained many improper persons, without the consent of their lords or of the magistrates.' These alarms could only have been excited by the number, zeal and perseverance of the Irish bishops, and the jealousy with which the Romish clergy regarded their exertions as a missionary church.

There is a very curious and authentic record preserved in Wilkins's Councils, which not only confirms what has been advanced with respect to the number of Irish bishops, but also clearly explains the nature of their ancient episcopacy.

‘A.D. 1216. Constitutions made in the cathedral church of St. Peter’s and St. Paul’s of Newton, Athunry, by Simon Rochford, by the grace of God, bishop of Meath,—Cardinal Paparo, legate of the sovereign pontiff Eugenius III.’ having directed in the third general council, held at Kells, in Meath, in the year 1152, among other salutary canons, ‘that on the death of a village bishop, or of bishops who possessed small sees in Ireland, rural deans should be appointed by the diocesans, to succeed them, who should superintend the clergy and laity in their respective districts, and that each of their sees should be erected into a rural deanery,—we, in obedience to such regulations, do constitute and appoint that in the churches of Athunry, Kells, Slone, Skrine and Duns-hauglin, being heretofore bishops’ sees in Meath, shall hereafter be the heads of rural deaneries, with arch-presbyters personally residing therein.’¹

¹ We might naturally suppose that the framers of ‘The Church Temporalities Bill’ had this canon of the Council of Kells in their eye, when they concocted that ruinous measure. The objects of both appear to have been the same, the destruction of our national church. The Popish canon indeed seems to have been the lesser evil, as the temporalities of the church were left undi-

Here we have a clear and full developement of the state of our ancient hierarchy, and a confirmation of what has been stated, namely, that Ireland was full of village bishops. Meath could boast of Clonard, Duleek, Trim, Ardbraccan, Dunshauglin, Slane, Foure, Skrine, Mullingar, Loughseedy, Athunry, Ardmirchor and Hallyloughort, Dullin, Swords, Lusk, Finglas, Newcastle, Tawney, Leixlip, Bray, Wicklow, Arklow, Ballymore, Clondalkin, Tal-lagh, and O'Murthy. These were all formerly rural sees. The transmutations, however, which commenced with the introduction of popery in 1152 proceeded very slowly, for by Bishop Rochfort's constitutions, it appears they were far from being completed in the thirteenth century.

If the number of rural deaneries at their first erection and afterwards, in consequence of Paparo's regulation, could be ascertained, it would give us the number of our rural sees. 'Our bishops,' says Ledwich, 'might have amounted to above three hundred.' This peculiarity in our ecclesiastical polity strongly in-

minished, and a provision made in it 'for the *residence* of arch-presbyters to superintend the clergy and laity in their respective districts.'

dicates our eastern, and consequently our anti-Romish origin.

The next proof of the eastern origin of the Irish church, and its opposition to Rome, is derived from the circumstance, that the original practice of hereditary succession was firmly established in the primitive Irish church.

St. Bernard, in his life of Malachy, complains of this custom in the following words:—
' A most pernicious custom had gained strength, by a diabolical ambition of some men in power, who possessed themselves of bishoprics by hereditary succession; nor did they suffer any to be put in election for them, but such as were of their own tribe or family, and this kind of execrable succession made no small progress, for fifteen generations had passed over in this mischievous custom, and so far had this wicked and adulterous generation confirmed itself in this untoward privilege, that although it sometimes happened that clergymen of their family failed, yet bishops of it never failed; in fine, eight married men, and *not in orders*, though men of learning, were predecessors of Celsus in Armagh.' ¹

¹ The Romish church denied the validity of the ordination of

The first twenty-seven bishops of Ross Carbery were of the family of St. Fachan, its first prelate. To this we may add that Columba, founder of the celebrated Culdean Monastery at Iona, being of the Tyrconnelian blood, the abbots his successors were of the same race. Hereditary succession became a fixed municipal law, and pervaded church and state, and hence the struggle in the See of Armagh, to which Malachy O'Morgan was appointed in 1129, to the exclusion of the old family; which had nearly proved fatal to him, and called forth the warm resentment of St. Bernard his friend. It further appears that after the consolidation of Glendalough with Dublin in 1152 and 1179, the Toolcs, the original proprietors, still obtained the title and presentation until 1497.

From this it seems evident that our bishops and clergy were married men, till the introduction of popery in the 12th century, and to this St. Bernard refers when he says, 'they were a wicked and adulterous generation.'

Again, the ancient liturgy of the Irish church agreed with the Greek, and manifestly differed from the Roman, in the Communion Service, in

the clergy of the primitive Irish church, as they do that of the reformed Catholic church of the present day.

the prophetic lessons, in the sermon and offices after it, and in various other particulars.¹ The Irish we are told by St. Bernard, in his life of Malachy, 'rejected auricular confession, as well as authoritative absolution.' They confessed to God alone, as believing 'God alone could forgive sins.' They would neither give to the church of Rome the tenths nor the first fruits, nor would they be legitimately married; that is, according to the forms insisted on by the Romish church. Before the council of Cashel, convened by Henry II. in 1172, marriage was regarded as a civil rite, and was performed by the magistracy: at that council, the priests were authorized to perform the ceremony, and therefore we find the ancient Irish Christians denounced 'as schismatics and heretics,' by St. Bernard; and as being in reality 'Pagans, while calling themselves Christians.'

Such were the charges brought against the early Irish Christians, and such were some of the heresies which Adrian authorized Henry to root out of the land. But these were not all, the early Irish Christians did not believe in the efficacy of prayers to saints and angels. They

¹ Ledwich.

neither prayed *to* dead men, nor *for* them, nor was the service for the dead ever used by the Irish church till they were obliged to attend to it by the council of Cashel, as may be seen by a reference to the proceedings of that convention.¹

That the doctrine of transubstantiation was not held by the early church of Ireland, is evident by the reception which it received, on its being first promulgated by several Irish divines, among others, by the justly celebrated Joannes Scotus Eugina, so highly esteemed at the court of Charles the Bald, for his learning and piety, and whose book was condemned by the pope and the council of Versailles, as the only way they could confute it. Previous to this the Irish received the Lord's Supper in both kinds, and they called it "the communion of the body and blood of their Lord and Saviour."

In their places of worship they had no images nor statues; on the contrary, their use was not only expressly condemned, as we learn from Sedulius, one of their early divines, but mentioned also by others of them 'as heathenish and idolatrous.'

¹ Vide Canon 7.

So far were the early Irish Christians from believing in purgatory, that until the period of Henry and Adrian's usurpation, the word does not appear to have been known to the Irish writers. That a number of the ceremonies of the Romish church, such as attending to canonical forms, singing in choirs, the use of the consecrated chrism in baptism, the sacrifice of the mass, and the dispensing of indulgences, were unknown, or at least unpractised in Ireland, until the period referred to, is matter of undoubted historical record; the circumstances being alluded to by various Romish writers, who complain of the stubbornness and heretical feeling of the Irish on these points, and who have happily furnished the most undoubted evidence as to the comparative purity of the church they so fiercely endeavour to malign.

Among others who have unwittingly substantiated its claims, we may mention Gillebert, the pope's Legate, and bishop of Limerick, who in the 11th century wrote what he calls 'the canonical custom of performing the offices of the whole ecclesiastical order,' in which he informs those for whom they were prepared, that it was 'to the end that those different and schismatical orders by which almost all Ireland

was deluded, might give place to one Catholic and Roman office.'

The letter of Henry to Adrian is conclusive evidence on this subject. In that letter, he alleged, 'that as the Irish were *schismatics* and *bad Christians*, it was necessary to reform them, and oblige them to own the papal authority, which *they had hitherto disregarded*, and that the most probable means was to bring them into subjection to the crown of England,' which he says 'had ever been devoted to the holy see;' and as the best evidence that can be adduced is that of an enemy, I may also mention, that furnished by Bede, from whom we learn that Pope Honorius, when using the strongest argument he could devise in order to induce the Irish church to submit to the Roman see, exhorted them, 'not to esteem their own small number wiser than all the rest of the world;' hereby admitting in the strongest possible way their estrangement from, and entire disagreement with the see of Rome.

Before concluding this part of our subject, it may be well to notice the peculiarities of the seven churches, and the round towers existing so generally in Ireland, both striking manifestations of our eastern origin. The Irish, it is

evident, entertained a singular veneration for the number seven,—witness the seven churches at Glendalough, Clonmacnois, Inniscatry, Inchferrin, Inniskeatra, and the seven altars of Clonfert and Holy Cross. In fact the country is studded with their remains, which are generally found situated in islands.

This number seven seems evidently to have been chosen in honour of him from whose disciples they had received the gospel, and in an humble imitation and remembrance of the seven primitive churches of the book of Revelations, to which this great apostle of the early saints in Ireland addressed his seven epistles from the isle that is called Patmos. When we take all these separate facts into consideration, comparing the admission of enemies, and the testimony of friends, with the remains of antiquity, all testifying to an eastern origin; we can clearly perceive the meaning of the memorable declaration of St. Coleman, at the council of Whitby, ‘I marvel how some can call that absurd in which we follow the example of so great an apostle, one who was thought worthy of reposing upon the bosom of his Lord; and can it be believed that such men, as our venerable father Columkill and his suc-

cessors would have thought or acted things contrary to the precepts of the sacred pages.' Again, ' This Easter which I use to observe, I received from my elders, who sent the bishop hither, which all our fathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated after the same manner.' And again, ' It is the same, which the blessed evangelist St. John, the disciple specially beloved by our Lord, with all the churches that he did oversee is read to have celebrated.'

Here we may observe the apostolic succession of the Irish church clearly pointed out. ' St. John the evangelist; Ignatius, the immediate disciple of St. John; Polycarp the disciple of Ignatius; Pothinus, Irenæus and others, the disciples of Polycarp, who preached the gospel with great success in Gaul: through whose means flourishing churches were established in Lyons and Vienne, of which Pothinus was the first bishop. From thence the gospel sounded forth throughout all that country. Bishops Lupus and German, the descendants of these holy men, ordained St. Patrick, and made him chief bishop of their school among the Irish; and from St. Patrick to the present day, we have our regular succession of

bishops, NOT FROM ROME, NOR THROUGH ROME, BUT THROUGH THE SUCCESSORS OF THE APOSTLE JOHN, THE PATRON OF THE IRISH CHURCH.'

We shall now conclude this part of our subject, with a quotation from a Roman Catholic writer on the ecclesiastical affairs of Ireland. 'There is,' says the writer in question, 'something very singular in the ecclesiastical history of Ireland. The Christian church of that country, as founded by St. Patrick and his predecessors, existed for many ages free and unshackled. For about 700 years, this church maintained its independence. It had no connection with England, and differed upon points of importance from Rome. The first work of Henry II. was to reduce the Church of Ireland, into obedience to the Roman Pontiff. Accordingly he procured a council of the Irish clergy to be held at Cashel, in 1172, and the combined influence and intrigues of Henry and the Pope prevailed. This council put an end to the ancient Church of Ireland, and submitted it to the yoke of Rome,—that ominous apostasy has been followed by a series of calamities, hardly to be equalled in the world. From the days of Patrick, to the council of Cashel, was

a bright and glorious career for Ireland. From the sitting of this council to our time, the lot of Ireland has been unmixed evil, and all her history a tale of woe.'—O'Driscoll's Views of Ireland, Vol. ii. p. 85.

CHAPTER II.

St. Columba and the Irish Culdees—their office—the Greek and not the Roman ritual—Distinguished for their learning and attachment to their religion—the origin of the name Culdee—Columba—His character and that of his successors, as given by Bede—Founded the Monastery of Iona—In the observation of Easter a quartadeceman—Scotland and the north of England evangelised through him and his successor's instrumentality—Persecution of the Romish Church—Oswald, King of Northumberland, converted to the faith of Christ, while in Ireland—Preaching of Aiden, the Irish Bishop, the King interpreting—Lindisfarn given for his Episcopal See—Aiden succeeded by Finan—Finan succeeded by Coleman—The discussion of Whitby—The decline and fall of the order of Culdees.

It is stated by O'Connor, that there existed in Ireland, nearly an hundred years before the mission of St. Patrick, and independent of the see of Rome, an order of Monks called Culdees. Their rule was invented by St. Athanasius, a Greek father, and Bishop of Alexandria in Egypt. Their office was the Greek, and not the Roman, and even in their mode of ton-

sure, they differed from similar establishments in the Roman church.

This order was in many things very remarkable, and one of its most eminent members was our far-famed Columba, or St. Columbkil, who is considered in the martyrology of Donegal, and by Colgan, as joint patron with St. Patrick of Ireland, and whose name is as familiar to every Irish ear as that of St. Patrick himself. It is indeed connected with some of the most venerated places in Ireland; for he founded, as Jocelyn says, one hundred monasteries, and established many churches.

In such a remote corner of the world as Ireland was then considered, this celebrated monastic order commenced. Distinguished for letters, and an inviolable attachment to their religion, their adversaries, (men indeed devoted to the see of Rome,) have endeavoured to consign their names and tenets to oblivion, while others of inferior merit are pompously brought forward and extolled for virtues which they never possessed, and for actions which they never performed. Nor have those alone who collected memorials of the champions of divine truth recorded their merits, but the writings of Bede, Lloyd, Usher, and above all, those of

Sir Robert Sibbald, and Sir James Dalrymple, have placed their reputation and noble defence of their doctrines and liberties on the most solid basis.

The origin of their name has given rise to various conjectures. Toland says it is derived from Ceili de, the separated, or espoused of God. Bishop Nicholson, from Coul-du, a black hood, which, without authority, he supposes to have been the principal part of their dress; whereas from a passage in Bede, it is probable their garments were white. Shaw's opinion is, that Ceil-de or servant of God, was latinized into Keledeus and Colideus, from whence we derive the English name Culdees. The great difficulty in accounting for the name, arises from not knowing the precise time when it was given, if it were at a late period. Nicholson may be right, but not so if at an early one, for sanctity was attached to dress only by the late monastic orders.

Columba the founder, or rather the reviver of this order, was born of illustrious parents,¹

¹ Columba's father was Felim, the son of Fergus, who was grandson of the great Nial, King of Ireland; and the mother of Felim was Aithne, daughter of Lorn, who first reigned in conjunction with his brother Fergus, over the Scots or Dalrendini in Argyleshire.

² In those times, noblemen were not seldom the preachers of the

A. D. 522. The fashion of the times, and his own propensity, led him to the cultivation of ascetic virtues, and their preparatory exercises. Monachism had taken root in this kingdom, and was already flourishing in its numerous seminaries, and supported by their learned professors ; the most remarkable of the former was that of St. Finian at Clonard, where at the age of twenty-five we find St. Columba engaged in study, and acquiring the rudiments of that knowledge, and exercising that discipline which were afterwards productive of such eminent advantages to Christianity, not only in Ireland, but in Scotland and England.

Having completed his monastic education in 546, he founded the monastery of Durrogh, and established such admirable rules for his monks, that they soon became as conspicuous for erudition, as for sanctity of manners. The Scots have claimed these monks as their own, and as springing up in their country so early as the beginning of the fourth century, but Bishop Nicholson, no friend of the order, expressly says, ‘ the Culdees were of the Irish rule, and

gospel, and it is probable, *they may be so again*, when they shall find that neither their persons nor their property can be secure without it.’—*Smith’s Life of St. Columba*.

carried into Scotland by St. Columba, and from thence dispersed into the northern parts of England.'

Brilliant parts, and an untiring zeal in the service of religion, with a strain of powerful eloquence, exalted Columba's reputation among his countrymen to a degree scarcely inferior to that of an apostle. Such talents were too large to be confined within the narrow pale of a monkish cell; they were called forth to the regulation of state affairs, and in these he held as decided a superiority as in the cloister. Amidst this splendour of authority and of parts, it would have been miraculous if human weakness did not sometimes betray him into error, from which his biographers do not attempt to exculpate him.

In his early youth he instigated a bloody war without just cause, of which being made sensible, he abjured his native land by a voluntary exile, and imposed on himself a mission to the unconverted Picts.

Of this event Bede thus speaks :—' In the year of our Lord's incarnation 565, there came out of Ireland into Britain, a presbyter and abbot,—a monk in life and habit, very famous, by name Columba, to preach the word of God

to the provinces of the northern Picts. This Columba came to Britain, when King Bridius, son of Meilochem, reigned over the Picts. It was in the ninth year of his reign, that by his preaching and example he converted this nation to the faith of Christ.'

From this passage it appears evident, that Columba and his disciples have clearly the merit of promulgating the gospel with effect in Scotland, notwithstanding the partial labours of earlier missionaries; by it also the date of the arrival of the Culdees is immoveably fixed.

In consequence of Columba's preaching, his example, and success, the Isle of Ely¹ was

¹ The ancient name was I Hy or Aoi, (as written in the annals of Ulster,) which were latinized into Hyona or Iona, the common name of which is now I-Colum-Kill, (the Isle of Colum of the cells,) included in one of the parishes of the Island of Mull. Its venerable ruins still command respect, and the popular belief, founded upon a prophetic distich ascribed to St. Columba, is, that they may yet recover their ancient splendour.

O sacred dome, and my beloved abode,
Whose walls now echo to the praise of God;
The time shall come, when lauding monks shall cease,
And lowing herds here occupy their place,
But, better ages shall hereafter come,
And praise re-echo in the sacred dome.

The first part of the prophecy was literally fulfilled for ages, till the present noble proprietor, the Duke of Argyll, caused the sacred ground to be enclosed with a sufficient wall. Before that,

given to him, whereon to construct a monastery. This isle is one of the Hebrides; not large, 'but sufficient,' says Bede, 'for the maintenance of five families, according to the computation of the English.'

'Before Columba came into Britain,' continues Bede, 'he formed a noble monastery in Ireland called Dearmach,¹ from which and Iona, many others have been established by his disciples in Britain and Ireland; over all these the island abbey, where he lies interred, has supreme rule. It is always wont to have a presbyter abbot for its rector, and even the bishops themselves, after an unusual and inverted order, ought to be subject, according to the example of that first doctor, who was no bishop, but a presbyter and monk.'

In the observation of Easter, Columba was a

the Cathedral was used sometimes as a pen for cattle—sic transit gloria mundi. 'We were now,' says Dr. Johnson, 'treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefit of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotions, would be impossible if it were attempted; and would be foolish, if it were possible.'

¹ The Dearmach mentioned by Bede, Camden, and Walsh, is supposed to be Armagh, but improperly. The word is Doir-magh, commonly called Durrough, and which Bede and Adamnan rightly interpret the oaken field.

quartadeceman.¹ He left it in charge to the monks of Iona, to keep it from the 14th to the 20th of the moon, which they continued to do until the year 716. This eminent missionary, worn out in the service of his divine master, died at Iona A. D. 597, aged 75 years. To dis-

¹ The Christians in the second century, says Mosheim, celebrated anniversary festivals in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ, and of the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. The day which was observed as the anniversary of Christ's death, was called the Paschal day, or Passover, because it was looked upon to be the same with that on which the Jews celebrated the feast of that name.

In the manner, however, of observing this solemn day, the Christians of Lesser Asia differed much from the rest, and in a most especial manner from those of Rome. They both indeed fasted during the great week, (so that was called in which Christ died,) and afterwards celebrated, like the Jews, a sacred feast, at which they distributed a paschal lamb, in memory of our Saviour's last supper. But the Asiatic Christians kept the feast on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, at the time that the Jews celebrated their passover, and three days after commemorated the resurrection of the triumphant Redeemer. They affirmed that they had this custom from the apostles John and Philip, and pleaded moreover in its behalf the example of Christ himself, who held his paschal feast on the same day that the Jews celebrated their passover. The Western churches observed a different method. They celebrated their paschal feast on the night that preceded the anniversary of Christ's resurrection, and thus connected the commemoration of the Saviour's crucifixion, with that of his victory over death and the grave. Nor did they differ thus from the Asiatics, without alleging also apostolic authority for what they did, for they pleaded that of St. Peter and St. Paul as

tinguish him from others of the same name, he was called Colum-celle, from having been the father of above one hundred monasteries.

Bede, though sincerely attached to the See of Rome, yet with candour and truth confesses the merits of the Culdees. 'Whatever he was himself, (speaking of Columba,) we know of him for certain, that he left a succession renowned for much continence, the love of God and regular observance. It is true, they followed uncertain rules in the observation of the great festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the keeping of Easter, by reason of their being seated so far from the rest of the world, therefore only practising such works of charity and piety, as they could learn from the PROPHETICAL, EVANGELICAL, AND APOSTOLIC WRITINGS.'

Their warmest panegyrist could not pronounce a finer eulogium on the purity of their faith and integrity of their practice. It is

a justification of their conduct in this matter. Hence arose sharp and vehement contentions between the eastern and the western churches until the fourth century, when the council of Nice abolished that of the Asiatics, and rendered the time of the celebration of Easter the same through all the Christian churches. Quartadecimans were those who followed the eastern custom, and consequently opposed the western or Roman mode.

true, they did not adopt the corruptions of the Romish church, nor the superstitions which had corrupted Christianity. For centuries they preserved their countrymen from the baneful contagion, and at length fell a sacrifice in defence of their ancient faith.

No sooner had the papal power got footing in England, than it made attempts on the Irish church, which had so successfully established itself in that kingdom; but the vigorous opposition of the Culdees delayed for some time, though it could not finally prevent its establishment. 'It was not a doubtful ray of science and superstition,' as the elegant, though infidel historian of the Roman empire remarks, 'that those monks diffused over the northern regions; superstition on the contrary found them her most determined foes.'

In 635, Oswald, king of Northumberland, who had been converted to the faith of Christ, among the Irish, and was no admirer of Roman innovations, sent to Iona for a Culdee bishop to instruct his people in evangelical truth. In consequence of which, Aiden, an Irishman, and a Culdee of Iona, was consecrated and sent over to him.

'He was a man,' says Bede, 'of the greatest

modesty, piety, and moderation, having a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, for he kept the Lord's day of Easter, according to the custom of his country.' This abatement of his merit could not be passed over by a votary of Rome, but it is conveyed in no rancorous nor intolerant language.

'The king,' continues Bede, 'gave the bishop the Isle of Lindisfern, on the coast of Northumberland, for his episcopal see. York was fixed upon by Pope Gregory before this time, but this nomination Aiden rejected, for two reasons, first, it was not agreeable to the spirit of Culdeeism, which chose islands in preference to the mainland, in imitation of their master Columba; and, secondly, he considered it would be an acquiescence in the decision of the Roman Pontiff, which the Irish hierarchy, complete and independent in itself, had not submitted to.'

'Oswald personally attended Aiden's ministry—when the latter preached, but not perfectly understanding the Anglo-Saxon tongue, the king was his interpreter;¹ for during his

¹ Fuller mentions this circumstance in his usual quaint manner :

'The Royal Interpreter.'

'When Aiden came first into England, he was not perfect in

exile in Ireland, he had learned the language of the isle. Numbers of Culdees daily arrived from Ireland; those who were priests baptized the converted. Aiden gave a luminous example of charity, piety, and abstinence, and recommended his doctrine by his practice.'

Thus far we have followed Bede, whose third book of ecclesiastical history, is principally employed in praise of the Culdees: wherever he mentions their dissent from Rome (and this was their only crime) he does it with great delicacy.

Aiden died in 671, and was succeeded by Finan, an Irishman, and Culdee of Iona. He baptised Peada, prince of the middle Angles, and gave him Dinma, a Culdee, for his bishop. After Dinma, Ceolla, another Culdee, was advanced to the episcopate of Mercia, but he resigned and returned to Iona. *To the apostolic labours of the Culdee missionaries were the*

the language of our country; wherefore, king Oswald, a better Irishman (as bred among them) than Aiden was an Englishman, interpreted to the people, what the other preached unto them. Thus these two, put together, made a perfect preacher; and although some may say, sermons thus at a second hand, must lose much of their life and lustre, yet the same spirit working in both, the ordinance proved effectual to the salvation of many souls.'—*Fuller*, vol. i. p. 122.

northern English indebted for their conversion, and Dr. Innet, in his learned '*Origines Anglicanæ*,' records their exertions in highly honourable terms.

Finan died, A. D. 661, and Coleman, a Culdee of Iona, succeeded him. He was an intrepid opposer of papal doctrines, as his disputation at Whitby with the Romanists fully proves. King Oswy, however, who presided at this conference at Whitby, had been too much tampered with by the Romish party, to be a fair arbitrator.

Coleman, when he found his opinions rejected, collected all the Irish Culdees at Lindisfern, and about thirty English monks, who were studying there, with whom he resorted for a short time to Iona, and at last sailed for Ireland. Immediately the Culdees were every where expelled from England by Oswy, and replaced by Benedictines. Not content with this triumph, the Romish clergy prevailed on Egfrid, king of Northumberland, to wreak their vengeance a few years after, on the diffident Irish, '*an harmless and innocent people* (says Bede, pitying their calamities) and always friendly to the English.'

Johnston, in his notes on the Saxon councils,

throws some light on the transactions at Whitby. 'The conference,' he remarks, 'was held in the presence of king Oswy, in a nunnery erected by Hilda, the abbess. Two Irish bishops were there, but Coleman was the principal advocate for the British and Irish Easter, and Wilfrid chief speaker for the Roman. Oswy, who had kept the Irish mode, yielded to Wilfrid, because he was told that St. Peter was the author of the Roman manner, and that he was the key-keeper of heaven, from which Oswy desired not to be excluded.'

The two Irish bishops retired unconvinced; the king pronounced sentence for himself only, and for his family, for before this, he had kept his Easter occasionally, while his queen (who was a Kentish lady, and followed the Roman manner) was keeping her Palm-Sunday. Oswy passed sentence, not in consideration of the merits of the case, but in honour of St. Peter. The controversy on this subject may be seen in Usher, and other ecclesiastical writers. At length Adamnan, the Culdean abbot of Iona, apostatized; and by the instigations of Ceolfred, abbot of Yirwy, Naitan, king of the Picts, expelled the Culdees from Iona in 717.¹

¹ Notwithstanding what is here stated, Lanigan, a Romish

Thus expired those illustrious seminaries of Culdees at Iona and Lindisfern, after bravely defending their tenets for more than a century, against the secret machinations and open violence of their enemies. At length they fell a sacrifice to the encroaching ambition and spiritual intolerance of the Church of Rome. 'A great access,' says Cressy, in a high tone of exultation, 'was made to the lustre of this year, by the conversion of the monks of Hy,

historian, asserts that 'the great monastery of Hy was still kept up, and considered as an Irish establishment so late as the year 1203; he proves this from a remarkable transaction that occurred in that year.

'One Kellach erected a monastery in Hy in opposition to the elders of the place; upon which the clergy of the north of Ireland held a meeting, which was attended by Florence O'Kervallen, bishop of Tyrone, the Bishop of Tirconnel, the abbot of St. Peter and Paul, Armagh, the abbot of Derry, and many others. Afterwards they all went to Iona, demolished the monastery which had been built by Kellach, and placed over it the abbot of Derry, who was unanimously elected abbot. What was Kellach's object in erecting a new monastery, I cannot ascertain,' says the wily priest; 'perhaps,' he continues, 'his intention was to introduce a new order into the island; perhaps the Cistercians or Augustin canons, for both of which there was a great predeliction in Ireland.'

From this circumstance it would appear that the monastery of Iona had reassumed its ancient customs, &c. and that this was a second attempt made by the Romish party, through the means of Kellach, to introduce their peculiar customs; but we find it checked by the Irish clergy in the bud.

and all the monasteries and churches subject to them, to the unity of the catholic church.'

The monasteries of Columba were the bright constellations of our hemisphere, enlightening every part with the brilliant radiance of the gospel, and of true learning. Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, says, 'Innet set up schools in every place to outdo the Irish, and break the interests of the quartadecemans' (for so the Culdees were called.) The Culdees continued, as an excellent writer observes, until a new race of monks arose, as inferior to them in learning and piety, as they surpassed them in wealth and ceremonies, by which they captivated the eyes, and infatuated the minds of men.¹

¹ It would be doing injustice to the subject, and leaving this outline of history imperfect, to omit some practices of the Culdees, which deserve notice. They, as well as the British monks, supported themselves by the labour of their hands. In this they resemble their archetypes of the east. The Culdees were married, but when it came to their turn to officiate, they did not cohabit with their wives. By the 28th canon of the African code, subdeacons, who handle the holy mysteries, deacons, priests, and bishops, are directed at their several terms to abstain from their wives. By TERMS, as explained by the 13th of the Trullan canons, are meant *the times of their ministrations*, or as the old scholiast on the 3d African council understands it, *some time before and after the Eucharist*, a practice derived from Egypt.

Northumberland was converted by Irish Culdees. In 950, the

The registry of St. Andrew's informs us, that the Culdees, relaxing in discipline, were deprived of their possessions, but king Alexander restored them on condition that they should be more attentive in attending divine service, which they neglected, except when the king or bishop was present ; performing, however, *their own office in their own way*, in a small corner of the church. This account is obscure, merely because the whole truth is not stated, for the registry acquaints us, when Alexander began the reform in the church of St. Andrew, there was no one to serve at the altar of the blessed apostle St. Andrew, or *to celebrate mass*. This clearly shews, that the Culdees, who were settled there, paid no respect to these holy relics, or *to the mass* itself, but chose rather to forfeit their church and property than desert their principles, preferring their ancient office with integrity of heart *in a corner*, to the possession of the choir and its superstitious pageantry. Their office was Gallican, and very different from the Roman : and consequently

priests of that country published canons, one of which was, ' If a priest dismiss one wife, and take another, let him be anathema.' The Culdees of St. Andrew's were married men till the year 1100.

we may conclude that it was not *the mass* they celebrated (which Pope Gregory confesses was the work of a private person and not of apostolic authority) for the Culdees only followed, as appears from Bede, what they could learn ‘from the *prophetical, evangelical, and apostolic writings.*’ The Anglo-Saxons accepted the Roman office. but the Britains and Irish retained their primitive forms.

The conduct of the Romanists towards the Culdees was uniformly persecuting. A charter of David, king of Scotland, recites, ‘that he had given to the canons of St. Andrew, the isle of Lochleven, to institute there, *the canonical rule* (or in other words, the Romish ritual) and that the Culdees, its ancient possessors, might continue there, if they would conform to that rule and live peaceably, and in subjection to the canons, but if they rejected these terms, they were to be expelled.’ This proposal being incompatible with their principles, was not acceded to, and consequently they were ejected.

In Ireland the Culdees made a noble stand against papal innovations, and all the powers of Rome, assisted by the power of England, was unable to eradicate them, for we learn from

Archbishop Usher, even in his time, that 'in the greater churches in Ulster, as at Cluaninnis and Daminais, and particularly at Armagh, in our memory, were Presbyters called Cul-dees, who celebrated divine service in the choir, their president being styled prior of the Cul-dees, who acted as precentor.'

It was not easy indeed to eradicate a reverence founded on solid piety, exemplary charity, and superior learning, or to commit sudden violence on characters where such qualities were found. The Romish clergy were therefore obliged to exert their utmost cunning to accomplish their designs, and where force could not, seduction often prevailed. The alternative of expulsion or acquiescence, must ever strongly operate on human infirmity. In a few instances, the latter was chosen: thus about the year 1127, Gregory, abbot of the Culdees' monastery of Dunkeld, and Andrew, his successor, were made bishops, the first of Dunkeld, the other of Caithness. The last cited intelligent antiquary (Dalrymple, p. 246.) confirms the wary manner in which the Cul-dees were treated; by making their abbots bishops, and preserving to those who had parishes, their benefices during life.

The same policy was followed in Ireland, the president of the Culdees was made precentor, he was to have the most honourable seat at table, and every respect from the chapter. Such little distinctions, whilst they flattered and saved appearances, were fatal to the Culdees. Many breaches were made in their rights, and at last, they lost all their privileges and their old institute, and retained barely the name of their pristine celebrity. Such as they were in later ages, they continued to exist, and so late even as 1625. They had considerable property in Armagh, namely, seven townlands, with smaller parcels, with a great number of rectories, vicarages, tythes, messuages, and houses. These parishes and property have been transferred to Trinity college, Dublin, an Institution established for similar purposes to those of the original Culdee seminaries, and among others, TO PRESENT A DETERMINED FRONT AGAINST POPISH NOVELTIES AND INNOVATIONS.

CHAPTER III.

The Introduction of Romanism into Ireland—Invasion of the Danes and Normans—Ireland reduced thereby to a wretched state of destitution—The Conversion of the Invaders, the first step to the overthrow of the ancient Church—The See of Dublin erected—Donagh the first Bishop receives Consecration from the Archbishop of Canterbury—Lanfranc insinuates himself into the good graces of the Irish monarch Turlogh—The correspondence with the English Primate produces an unfavourable impression on the minds of the Irish clergy—Gillebert an Ostman, Bishop of Limerick appointed the Pope's Legate—His work on the order and discipline of the Romish Church—Anselm's Letter to the Bishops of Ireland—He cultivates the good disposition of the Irish monarch—The Council of Aongus—Reduction of the Bishops' Sees—Celestine and the clergy alarmed when it was too late—Malachy, Celestine's successor, solicits without effect the Pall from the Pope—The rapid increase of Romanism from the criminal indifference of the Irish government—Cardinal Paparo sent to Ireland as the Pope's Legate.—The Council of Kells—Paparo bestows four Palls on the four Primates—Pope Adrian's Bull.—Confirmatory Letter from Pope Alexander to Henry the Second.—The English invasion—The Synod of Cashel—The great Ecclesiastical Revolution—The origin of the two Churches in Ireland.

THE Irish annals inform us, says Sir James Ware, that in the year 795, the Danes and Normans first infested the Irish coasts. From

this period till the English invasion, the history of Ireland presents an uniform scene of plunder and oppression on the part of the invaders, and when the English established themselves therein, few traces remained either of that learning which had attracted students from every nation in Europe, and had educated the celebrated Alfred,* or of those arts of which the buildings, particularly the round towers, whose ruins lie scattered over the country, prove the existence.

Before the Danish invasion, the Irish church had considerable possessions. Its revenues were derived principally from lands. Our national writers are unanimous in representing the Island as studded with bishops' sees, colleges, and religious houses, numerous beyond the example of other countries, and rich according to the circumstances of the people and the times. The ravages of the Danes commenced

* Bede says of him, that he had studied a long time among the Irish in *their Islands* (alluding to the Islands on which they built their seven churches and schools,) and that he was very learned in the Scriptures, viz. in Scripturis doctissimus. (Eccle. Hist. L. iv. c. 26.) Harpsfeld, treating of his return to Northumberland, describes him as having improved himself so much by his studies, *particularly sacred*, in Ireland, that he became highly qualified for being placed at the head of a state. (Lanigan, B. iv. P. 96.)

with the ninth century, and for three hundred years we lose all distinct notices of things, in one sanguinary chaos of rapine and revenge.

When men began to recover from this dreadful visitation, it was felt that religion had suffered grievously; the horrors of intestine warfare, favourable, perhaps, in single instances, to an austere and unsocial piety, are fatal to the milder virtues, *and three centuries of invasion will suffice for the corruption of the finest people.*

Nor could the clergy escape the general degeneracy. There was abundant time for the decay of discipline, of learning, and of manners; and the succession of the priesthood, supplied altogether from domestic sources, must have experienced no inconsiderable interruption. The temporal condition of the church was reduced equally.

During the incursions of the barbarians, the retreats of religion had been the chief objects of their fury; and amidst the thousand necessities and temptations of such a time, the natives were gradually led to join in the spoliation. 'The gentry of the old Milesian race were worn out and degenerate,' and their successors combined the ferocious brutality of the invaders,

with those more dastardly and contemptible vices which characterize a tarnished and decaying civilization. They did not allow either birthright or independence to the mass of the people, but held them in the most abject bondage of feudal servitude.

Being now freed from other warfare, they turned their arms against the ministers of peace. Their favourite exploit was the burning of churches and colleges, and when a prince aspired to pre-eminent renown, he fitted out an expedition against those religious houses which he suspected of retaining a wreck of their former possessions.

Of the see lands, the greater part was seized by the chieftains, and the remainder subjected to heavy imposts for the support of their numerous and disorderly followers ; and the better to secure for themselves the temporalities of the prelates, they intruded even upon their spiritual functions. The princes of the territory in which Armagh was situated, usurped the title as well as the demesnes of the successor of St. Patrick, and the example was followed by many of their rapacious nobles.

Such appears to have been the state of Ireland, when the see of Rome commenced tam-

pering with our princes and prelates. The first severe shock which the Irish church received being from these foreigners ; for after their conversion to Christianity, instead of uniting with, and restoring the purity of our church, and reviving the splendour of our institutions, and literary seminaries, which their pagan zeal had nearly annihilated, in the tenth century, they introduced the Benedictine order of monks, who sought admiration more from the lustre of their external performances, than from the cultivation of useful literature or substantial piety. In the eleventh century these piratical foreigners had established kings in almost every part of the Island.

Silitzic, one of these Danish kings, reigned in Dublin about the year 1038, where he erected a see, making Donagh his countryman its first bishop. He received consecration, and the episcopal dignity, from the Archbishop of Canterbury. * On the death of Donagh, the clergy and people of Dublin elected Patrick, and recommended him to Lanfranc, the English primate, for consecration, which he received in St. Paul's church in London ; on which occa-

* Usher. Syllog, p. 100.

sion he made the following profession of obedience, '—Whoever is set in authority over others, ought not to disdain to be subject unto others, but rather with all humility give that obedience to his superiors which he requires from those that are subject to him. Wherefore I Patrick, elect bishop of Dublin, the metropolis of Ireland, offer to you, Reverend Lanfranc, primate of Britain, and promise obedience to you and your successors, in all things relating to the Christian religion;' or as it might be more truly expressed, in all thing relating to the Romish church.

Lanfranc, taking advantage of this favourable circumstance, in order to advance the cause of Romanism in Ireland, accompanied the consecration of Bishop Patrick to the see of Dublin with a letter to Gothric, 'the glorious king of Ireland,' and another to Turlogh, 'the magnificent king of Ireland,' as he stiles them. In his epistle to Gothric, the primate states some customs which he desires him to correct, holding out the expectation of acknowledging his authority, thus endeavouring to lay down a precedent for his future interference in the internal regulations of the Irish church.

Lanfranc having secured the attachment of

Gothric, the Danish monarch, proceeded further to insinuate himself, by the most flattering language, into the good opinion of the Irish monarch Turlogh. He tells him, 'God bestows no greater mercies upon the earth, than when he promotes to the government of souls and bodies, such as affect peace and love justice, and especially when he commits the kingdom of the world to GOOD KINGS ; from hence peace arises, discord is extinguished, and to sum up all, the observance of the Christian religion is established, which blessing every prudent observer perceives to have been conferred on the people of Ireland, when the omnipotent God granted to your excellency, the right of kingly power over the land.' He adds, 'that the bishop Patrick had declared so many great and good things of him, that he loved him, though unseen, as if he had known him.' *

All this was very plausible, but full of insincerity, for nothing in the Irish church could afford Lanfranc satisfaction, so long as her hierachy acknowledged no subjection to him, that her clergy were married, and her rites and ceremonies were not in unison with the Church

* Usher. Syllog.

of Rome. He therefore only artfully touches on matters which could give no great offence to the Irish clergy, and that in the gentlest manner, he remarks *their* uncanonical marriages,—that bishops were consecrated but by *one*,—and children baptised without chrism,—and holy orders conferred for money,—and in conclusion he begs of Turlogh to assemble a synod of his bishops and clergy, to rectify these abuses.

From this circumstance it appears that our monarchy and hierarchy were at this time complete and independent,—not subjected either to a legate, to the archbishop of Canterbury, nor to the Pope.

This correspondence with the English primate produced an highly unfavourable effect on the minds of the Irish clergy. They gradually became prejudiced against the old religion of the country, and disposed to innovation. Dazzled with the recent success of the Normans in England, and perhaps terrified at the fate of that kingdom, and the spiritual sovereignty claimed by the British primate over Ireland, they thought it better to shew some condescension on this occasion, than provoke a doubtful contest, and therefore at the end of the

eleventh century, they admitted Gillebert, or more correctly Giselbert, a foreigner as his name intimates, *as legate*, who was at the same time bishop of Limerick, a great Norman settlement; and it was soon apparent the legantine authority could not be in safer hands, or committed to one more obsequious to the court of Rome, and to Anselm who succeeded Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury, and with whom he was acquainted at Rouen.* He was a man of some ingenuity and learning, as his tract in Usher evinces. This tract contains a plain and simple account of the orders and discipline of the Romish Church, and was obviously composed to instruct the Irish, with what they were before ignorant of, and to prevail on them to adopt an uniformity in the celebration of divine offices.

In the prologue, Gillebert says, 'At the request and even command of many of you, dearly beloved, I have endeavoured to set down in writing the canonical custom, in saying of hours, and performing the office of the whole ecclesiastical order; not presumptuously, but through desire to serve your most godly command, to the end that those *diverse and schis-*

* Usher. Syllog. p. 88.

matical orders, wherewith, in a manner, *all Ireland is deluded*, may give place to one catholic and Roman office.' 'What can appear more indecent and schismatical, than that the most learned in one order, shall be ignorant as a layman in another.' 'As the dispersion of tongues arose from pride and were again joined in apostolic humility, so the confusion of orders from negligence or corruption, is to be brought by your pious endeavours to the holy rule of the Roman Church.' 'It is plain from many parts of Scripture, how carefully the faithful should preserve unity in possession: for all the members of the church are subject to one bishop who is Christ, and to his blessed apostle Peter, and to his apostolic representative in his seat, and they ought to be governed by them.'

This tract is addressed to the *dissenting* bishops and presbyters of Ireland, for it would have been an insult to the Romish ecclesiastics to have addressed to them, (as if novices,) such an elementary work. In it he explicitly declares their *schismatical* orders differed from the Roman, that is their ritual and forms of worship, for such is often the meaning of the word *order* in the Romish vocabulary. In

1094, Gillebert sent a present of twenty-five pearls to Anselm, and congratulates him on his criminal triumph over his sovereign in the affair of investitures.

The English primate having obtained an entrance for his legate, through the favour of the Irish monarch, instantly began tampering with the clergy. In 1095 he addressed an epistle to his reverend fellow-bishops in Ireland, in which he particularly mentions the *senior* Domnald and Donat, the latter, bishop of Dublin, the former of Armagh. He endeavoured to excite their pity for his sufferings in the cause of the church. He exhorts them to vigilance and sincerity in ecclesiastical discipline, and adds, that if disputes about the consecration of bishops, or other causes could not be canonically settled among themselves, to bring them before him. This assumption of supremacy over the Irish Church, and the right of appeal, had a direct tendency to destroy its ancient independance.

Turlogh, the Irish monarch, had virtually surrendered his regal rights to the pope, through his delegate the English primate, when he recommended Donogh O'Haingly to succeed Patrick in the see of Dublin. Murtogh, who mounted the throne after Turlogh, joined his

nobility and clergy in a similar act, when they sent Malchus to be consecrated at Canterbury. Murtoth, who was involved in perpetual broils with his family and provincial kings, hoped by these concessions to derive no small aid from the power and friendship of the English court, in subduing and keeping in awe his own rebellious subjects.

Anselm did not omit to cultivate this good disposition in the Irish monarch, for he addressed to him two epistles, in which we find him mentioning in general the *uncanonical* state of the Irish church, and he specifies in proof of his assertion, the instances noticed by his predecessor Lanfranc, and advises him to call a council to correct these errors, and to regulate ecclesiastical affairs. This he did in 1111, when he convened the nobility and clergy in a place called Tiodhaongusa, or Aongussgrove, in the plain of Magh-Breassail in Meath, where was a wood sacred to religion from the remotest ages, and which on account of ancient prepossession was used in order to give greater solemnity to the proceedings. The number of clergy, according to Chronicon Scotorum, amounted to fifty-eight bishops, three hundred and seventeen priests, and sixty deacons, with

many of inferior orders. The same year another council was held in Meath, under the presidency of the pope's legate, when the numerous petty dioceses of that district were reduced to two, Clonmacnois and Clonard.

This attempt to reduce the number of our sees, and of course augment their revenues, rendered the clergy more wealthy, and the church more manageable by the pope and his legate. It required time, however, to accomplish these designs ; but a beginning was now first made in the plan laid down for the subjugation of the Irish church, which proved eventually but too successful. The decrees made by this assembly, were, that the clergy in future were to be exempt from taxation and secular laws ; whatever they contributed to the support of the state, was to be considered a free gift. The bishops were to resign the right they received from St. Patrick, of consecrating bishops at pleasure, and the number of bishops was hereafter to be limited to twenty-eight ; this last enactment was not however to encroach on the rights of the present possessors.

It must occur to every one, that these decrees could not be esteemed the avowed sentiments of the national clergy, for only about a

sixth part of the episcopal order consented to them, notwithstanding all the efforts of the monarch and his associates in favour of the Romish party. They were therefore the production solely of those who had embraced their views, and were under the influence of the English court. The activity of the king, indeed, proceeded partly from a secret motive. Robert de Montgomery, Earl of Salop, and Arnulph his brother, Earl of Pembroke, had rebelled against Henry I. Arnulph solicited assistance and his daughter's hand from Mortogh. The latter he obtained, but we are not told what aid he procured: we know the rebellion was unsuccessful, and Arnulph was obliged to seek refuge in Ireland. Mortogh writes to Anselm, and thanks him for interceding for his son-in-law, and adds, '*Be assured I will obey your commands.*'

This was the spring that set in motion the zeal of Mortogh, and made him perfectly obedient to the English primate and court, 'so devoted, (says William of Malmsbury,) were Mortogh and his successors to Henry I. that they 'writ nothing but what he directed.' We need not doubt, therefore, that Anselm used his own and Henry's influence in urging the Irish

monarch to new model the Irish church, and to bring it into complete subjugation to the see of Rome.

Matters, however, did not proceed so smoothly as they expected. The Irish clergy had been hitherto cajoled by proposals of schemes for reformation, which, as they could not decently oppose, they acquiesced in, to a certain extent; but when they discovered the unreasonable length to which affairs were likely to be carried, that their ecclesiastical polity was to be dissolved, and they and their church to become dependent on the nod of the Roman pontiff, they could no longer forbear expressing their resentment.

We therefore find the clergy and burgesses of Dublin informing Ralph, (Radolphus), who succeeded Anselm in Canterbury, that the bishops of Ireland, and especially he who resided at Armagh, felt the greatest indignation towards them for not accepting their ordination, and for desiring them to be under his, (Radolphus') spiritual dominion. But it was too late: our princes had lost their spirit and their power, and domestic discord suggested ambitious views to their designing neighbours.

Celsus or Celestine, bishop of Armagh, the prelate who thus resented the interference of

the English primate, though well affected in some respects to Rome, could not be prevailed on to separate from his wife and children. When dying, however, he was persuaded by the Romish party to send his crosier to Malachy O'Morgain, in token of his appointment to the see of Armagh. Malachy was a zealous champion for the new religion, and after some dangerous but successful struggles, ascended the archiepiscopal chair.

One of the first acts of Malachy was to solicit the pall for his see, from Pope Innocent II. but this his holiness declined: for the Irish clergy were as yet very far from yielding obedience to the court of Rome, and the pall at the present state of affairs, so far from commanding respect, might have subjected the wearer to insult. Though Malachy remained but three years in Armagh, being driven from thence by the old family, he still was active in advancing the cause he had espoused: in proof of which it appears that he introduced the Cistercian order into Ireland in the year 1140, by the advice and under the direction of St. Bernard, which he settled at Mellefont, Newry, Bective, Boyle, Baltinglass, Nenagh, and Cashel.

By these means, through the criminal inattention and inconsiderate sacrifices made by our princes, and the unabating zeal of its supporters, popery was daily gaining ground in Ireland.

Thus encouraged, the court of Rome sent John Paparo, Cardinal of St. Laurence in Damaso, into Ireland in 1152, to settle its hierarchy on a new and permanent plan. A council was consequently held in Kells, where Christian, bishop of Lismore presided, who had been educated at Clarivaux, under St. Bernard, and of course had the papal interest much at heart.

The great object of Paparo's legation was, as I said before, to new model the Irish hierarchy on the Roman plan, and by this means to bring them under the dominion of the Roman see, and above all to lay the foundation of a regular revenue to be paid for its support. These things could not be accomplished without altogether changing the constitution of the Irish church, the first step towards which was to reduce the number of its sees, the multiplicity of which (as I have elsewhere stated) bishop Rochfort's canons fully declare. Paparo also bestowed four palls * on the four primates,

¹ Pall. The mantle of an archbishop. ' An archbishop ought

which with the bulls for the other bishops, brought a large sum of money into the cardinal's coffers.

The Roman pontiff having now brought over a considerable party to his views in the Irish church, and finding the success of Paparo's legation very problematical, resolved to place Ireland in more powerful hands, and for this end he issued a bull, A. D. 1155. In which he (Pope Adrian) claims the sovereignty of our Island, which claim he founds on having discovered in the prophecies, 'A DIVINE RIGHT TO ISLANDS.' 'There is indeed no doubt (says the pope in his letter to Henry II.) as your highness also doth acknowledge that Ireland, and all the Islands upon which Christ the sun of righteousness hath shone, do belong to the patrimony of St. Peter, and the holy Roman church.'

This conveyance was made to Henry, and by him communicated to that portion of the Irish hierarchy which he considered friendly to his views. The negotiation between them was conducted secretly for some years, until circumstances had effected a lodgment for the English to be consecrated and anointed, and after consecration he shall have the *pall* sent him.' Ayliffe.

arms in Ireland.¹ The brief was then publicly read at the synod of Cashel, with the following

* The following interesting account of the first lodgement of the English arms in Ireland is given by the Rev. Dr. Walsh, author of 'An Overland journey from Constantinople to Vienna.'

'Between the harbours of Wexford and Waterford, is a tract of fertile land, containing about sixty square miles, called the baronies of Forth and Bargie. The appellations are significant : bar, is fruitful ; forth, is plenty ; and geo, the sea ; the names therefore indicate exactly the character of the place, a fertile and plentiful tract on the sea coast. Behind it runs a ridge of mountains, and before it is the sea ; so that it is in some measure insulated, and retains much of the primæval and original character of a place cut off from free intercourse with the rest of the country. It moreover lies directly opposite Cardiganshire in Wales ; and certain promontories projecting to the east, approach so near to the contiguous coast, as to invite the inhabitants of the other side to come over and visit it. From the earliest periods, therefore, long before the anglo-Norman invasion, a free intercourse had taken place between the two principalities, and many Irish families settled in Wales, and many Welsh in Ireland. The latter were so numerous, that a large district in the county Wexford is called Scarla Walsh ; and there is a long tract of high land in the neighbouring county of Kilkenny, called the Welsh mountains, from the number of families of this name and nation who settled there, and where at this day they form a sept or clan ; and as the colonization was gradually effected by free consent and friendly intercourse, the name of Welsh is held in more esteem by the peasantry of the country than they attach to others which are not strictly native, because it is not connected with those traditions of rapine and blood, which generally distinguished later foreign settlers during the troubles in Ireland. The language of Wales also was Celtic, and spoken by both people in common ; even at this day they are the same, and differ only in some dialectic peculiarities.

confirmatory letter from Pope Alexander the Third.

‘In the year 1169, however, this friendly intercourse was interrupted, and the first hostile foot from Wales pressed the soil of Ireland. The occasion was not very creditable to the morality of the invaders. The Normans having conquered England were now determined to pass over to Ireland, and only waited for a pretext to effect their purpose. This was soon afforded. Dermot Macmorrogh, the king of Leinster, had looked with a profligate eye on the wife of his neighbour, and induced her to abandon her husband, and take up her residence in his castle at Ferns. The Irish, it appears, held at this time in high respect the sacred obligation of marriage, for a general spirit of indignation was on this occasion felt and expressed, particularly by his own subjects, and Dermot was compelled to abandon his throne. In this distress he applied to Henry II. and the Normans who had recently conquered England, and they readily and without scruple, undertook to re-instate the adulterer. From this *causa Teterrima belli*, the lady has been called the ‘Irish Helen;’ the Greeks, however, proceeded to punish and not to protect the seducer of their frail beauty.

‘In the month of May, 1169, Robert Fitzstephen, then governor of Cardigan Castle, in Wales, accompanied by Harvey de Monte Marisco, collected a force of thirty knights, sixty esquires, and three hundred archers, and embarking in two ships (called *Bagg* and *Bunn*, according to the tradition of the country) they ran for the nearest headland, and disembarked at a point called at this day *Baganbun*, from the names of the vessels which brought them over. They were next day joined by *Prendergast*, with ten knights and two hundred archers, making in all, an army of six hundred men. Dermot had remained secreted in his castle of Ferns, waiting the arrival of the strangers; they therefore apprised him of their coming, and in the meantime fortified themselves on the promontory, till some expected reinforcements, which he promised to send, should arrive, to assist and guide them. In

‘ Alexander, Bishop, servant of the servants of God. To his dearly beloved Son, the noble

a short time he was able to dispatch his illegitimate son Donald, with 500 horse; and with this reinforcement they set out from their position to penetrate into the interior of the country. Their direct road would have been through the parish of Bannow, which lay opposite to them; but as they had two deep and rapid channels of the sea to cross, at the mouth of the bay, they were obliged to proceed round the other extremity of it. In their way they were opposed by some Irish collected hastily at Feathard. Here the first encounter took place between the Anglo-Normans and the Irish; and it is still called ‘ Battles town,’ by the peasants, in commemoration of that circumstance. It is further added by the tradition of the country, that Feathard was a name given to the town built on the spot by the conqueror, who called it ‘ Fought-hard,’ which was in process of time, corrupted into Feathard.

From hence, ascending the river, which falls into Bannow Bay, the invader passed through Goffe’s bridge to the town of Wexford. Wexford was originally built by the piratical Danes at a very early period, and called by them ‘ West, or Wexford, the Western bay.’ It was rudely fortified, but could not resist the invaders, now reinforced by all Macmorrogh’s adherents. It was therefore taken, and Dermot made it a present to Fitzstephen and Fitzgerald, as a reward for their services. Fitzstephen built on the river, not far from it, a castle, on a promontory of lime-stone rock, and so erected the first Norman fortification ever built in Ireland. This still stands, commanding the navigation of the Slaney, and is a very curious and conspicuous object.

This expedition was followed by that of Strongbow, Earl of Chepstow, who has gained the reputation of a conquest, which had been achieved by his predecessor, as Americus Vesputius, defrauded Columbus of his title to America. Strongbow passed the promontory of Baganbun, and proceeded up the contiguous harbour of Waterford. Waterford was also built by the Danes, and was a place of some strength and trade. It was called by them

King of England, health, grace, and apostolical benediction. Forasmuch as things given and granted upon good reason by our predecessors, are to be well allowed for, ratified, and confirmed; we, well pondering and considering the grant and privilege for, and concerning the dominion of the land of Ireland, to us appertaining, and lately given by our predecessor Adrian, do in like manner confirm, ratify, and allow the same, provided that there be reserved and paid to St. Peter, and to the Church of

Vader Fiord, the Father's harbour, and dedicated to Woden, the father of Scandinavian deities, of which the present name Waterford is an absurd corruption. On one side of Strongbow stood a tower, erected by the Danes on the Wexford, on the other, a church, built by the Irish, on the Waterford shore. It was necessary to land, but he hesitated on which side he should disembark to march to Waterford. On inquiring the names of the places he saw, he was informed one was the tower of Hook, and the other the church of Crook. 'Then,' said he, 'shall we advance and take the town by Hook or by Crook,' and hence originated a proverb now in common use. Strongbow took Waterford, where his grim statue, in blue lime-stone, stands at this day in the front of the Ring-tower close beside the river. He was followed by Henry II. with a large army, and so the warriors obtained the same footing in Ireland, as they had done in England; though it took them a much longer time afterwards to establish it. Henry adopted the example of Dermot; he made Dublin a present to his good citizens of Bristol, and the original of this cool and extraordinary gift of the capital of a kingdom to the traders of a commercial town is still extant in the record office of the castle of Dublin.—*The Amulet for 1830.*

Rome, the yearly pension of one penny, out of every house both in England and in Ireland; provided also that the barbarous people of Ireland be by your means reformed and recovered from their filthy life and abominable manners, that as in name, so in conduct and conversation they may become Christians: provided further that that rude and disordered church, being by you reformed, the whole nation may, together with the profession of the faith, be in act and deed followers of the same.'

Four years after, these two edicts were again solemnly promulgated by a synod held at Waterford. Henry was formally proclaimed Lord of Ireland, and the severest censures of the church denounced against all who should impeach the donation of the holy See, or oppose the government of its illustrious representative.

I shall now direct your attention to the nature and extent of the ecclesiastical revolution, which was brought about by the joint influence of Rome and England, and the contagion of priestly influence. A few facts decisive of this point, and acknowledged by the most learned of the Roman Catholic writers, are discernible amidst the darkness which overhangs our early history. 'It appears (says Dr.

Phelan,) that before this period, the Irish ecclesiastics took no oaths to the Pope.'—*Dr. O'Connor, Columbanus* iii. 160.

'They never applied to the see of Rome for bulls of nomination, institution, or 'exemption,' (Charles O'Connor, *Sen. Dissertation on Irish History*, p. 203,) 'they never appealed to Rome for the decision of Ecclesiastical causes,' (*Ibid.*) 'the bishops and prelates of a tribe were appointed by the chieftain, either directly, or with the previous form of an election by the priesthood.' (*Dr. O'Connor, Columb.* v. 45.) 'Papal legates had no jurisdiction in Ireland until the twelfth century, and after that period, their jurisdiction was limited to the English settlements.' (*O'Connor's Historical Address*, i. 10.) 'In general the discipline of the Irish church had so little correspondence with the Roman, that it received several hard names from the Papal Church of the twelfth century. Pope Alexander and Cambrensis call it **FILTHY**: Anselm and Gilbert, **SCHISMATICAL**: Bernard, **BARBAROUS**, and **ALMOST PAGAN**.' (*Lanigan, IV.* 12, 218.)

These instances are so many incontestible proofs, that the government of the Irish church was strictly domestic, and that the hierarchy

was completely independent of any foreign power. But we are not without more direct information on this subject, as it appears the ecclesiastics themselves were not exempted from military service until the year 799, after Ireland had been Christianized for more than six centuries, and the immunity was then granted, *without reference to Papal authority.*' (O'Connor, Sen. Disc. 216.) 'In other respects they owed their chieftains the customary duties of clansman, and were amenable to the ordinary Brehon jurisdiction.' (Lanigan iv. 209.)

Thus it appears that under the ancient system the power of an Irish prince was as absolute over the priesthood of his Sept as over any other class among his followers. But how striking the change that now took place! The writ of Henry II. appointing Fitzadelm to the Lieutenancy of Ireland, is addressed 'To his Archbishops, Bishops, **KINGS**, Earls, Barons, &c.' Henry III. commences one of his writs in these terms, 'Henry, by the grace of God, king of England, &c. To our venerable father **LUKE**, by the same grace, a bishop of Dublin, and to his trusty and well-beloved, Maurice Fitzgerald, his Lord deputy of Ireland, &c.'

The change also that took place regarding

church property was even more remarkable. Among the seven decrees of the Cashel synod, in the articles of union, as they may be called, between the anglo Irish church and state, there were four which regulated the revenues of the clergy. It was enacted by one of these, 'that church lands should be free from the customary exactions of the chieftains, from all demands, whether of money or of entertainment.' 'That they should be likewise exempt from certain fines imposed by the Brehon law; that all the faithful should pay tythes of their cattle, fruits, and all other increase.' And this was explained a few years after, by a sweeping commentary of the Dublin synod, as including the tythe of provisions, hay, flax, wool, the young of animals, and the produce of gardens and orchards. It was also enacted that all the faithful should pay a third of their moveable goods for a solemn burial, and for vigils and masses for the repose of their souls, and that, if they died unmarried, or without legitimate children, the bequest should be increased to one half.

Such was the splendid bribe to the traitorous church of Ireland. Its extensive lands protected from injury. A full tenth of the produce of all other lands, and more than a third of all

moveable property. Wherever the law or the arms of England prevailed, all these privileges were respected, while in other parts of the island the magnates followed their old usages, repressing tythes, levying contributions, and overwhelming their clergy, with the honour of their unceremonious visits, regardless alike of king and pontiff. The result of the council of Cashel was, that the Irish church should be assimilated in its rites and discipline to that of England, but we are informed by the decisive testimony of Dr. Lanigan, that wherever the natives maintained their independence, 'CLERGY AND PEOPLE FOLLOWED THEIR OWN ECCLESIASTICAL RULES, AS IF THE SYNOD OF CASHEL HAD NEVER BEEN HELD.'

From all these facts considered collectively, it appears unquestionable, that in those distant times (as well as at the present day) there were TWO CHURCHES IN IRELAND. The one the church of the parliament, and of the ascendant party, the other the church of the Irish clergy and people. The former, though a plant of foreign growth, had certain facilities for striking root, and overwhelming a rival in the night shade of its branches, which the genius of Christianity did not allow to its opponent. Yet

notwithstanding every disadvantage the native church continued for three centuries, and discovered even some languishing symptoms of life, as late as the reign of Henry the Seventh.

There is yet extant a bull of pope Innocent the Eighth, dated the eighth of February 1484, for the election of a collegiate church at Galway. It recites, 'that the people of the parish of St. Nicholas were civilized men, living in a walled town, and observing the decency, rites, and customs of the Church of England, and that their customs differed from those of the wild Highlandmen of that nation, who harassed them, so that they could not hear the offices or receive the sacraments of the church, according to the form which they and their ancestors of old time were accustomed to follow.' Then follows the enactment, 'that the college shall consist of one warden and eight presbyters, all civilized men, and duly holding the rites and order of the Church of England in the celebration of divine service.'

It is obvious from this document that those '*wild Irish highlanders*,' as the pontiff rather uncourteously styles them, still adhered to their own religious ceremonies, or at least had not yet conformed to the Roman ritual.

Even in the next reign we discover a circumstance which proves that the ancient Irish church was still in existence, and this at the very dawn of the reformation. Soon after Wolsey had been created the pope's Legate a latere, he manufactured a supply of bulls and dispensations for the Irish market, but of this supercargo Allen wrote to him a complaining account, stating that the commodities went off but slowly: 'the Irish,' he says, 'had so little sense of religion, that they married within the prohibited degrees, without dispensations; they also questioned his grace's authority in Ireland, especially outside the pale.' (Cox. p. 210. quoting from Lib. c. c. c. Lambeth.)

CHAPTER IV.

Outlines of the history of Romanism in Ireland—Lawrence O'Toole, the first Archbishop of Dublin—His allegiance to Henry II. suspected—His imprisonment and death—The next Archbishop places the city of Dublin under an interdict—An appeal to the Privy Council—The Clergy victorious—The zeal of the Bishop of Ferns in behalf of the revenues of his See—The contest between Henry III. and the Prelates—A curious petition of a widow in the following reign—King John's charter—The unqualified submission of the native Irish to Edward the First, with an offer of 8000 marks, to be received as faithful liegemen—The offer evaded—A second petition to the same effect again evaded—Jealousies occasioned by the appointment of Englishmen to the highest situations in the Church—Bishops and Clergy rebel against Edward the Second, and crown Edward Bruce King of Ireland—In the next reign they revolt again, and crown Simuel King of Ireland—The extraordinary demand of the Earl of Kildare on his taking the oath of allegiance.

We have now arrived at a very peculiar period of the history of the Irish Church. Romanism for the first time is presented to our view as the established religion of the country, and that under the most favourable circumstances—endowed with wealth beyond that of any church

in Europe—her prelates exalted in rank above the petty sovereigns of the land—supported and protected by popish England; so that we might naturally suppose that peace and harmony would exist to the fullest extent between the two countries.

But what are the facts of the case? ‘Scarcely,’ says Dr. Phelan, ‘had Henry II. returned to his hereditary dominions, when the bishops, presuming on the service they had performed, began to embarrass, and insult the Irish government. It had been stipulated in Adrian’s bull, that the borders of the church should be enlarged; an expression, which does not signify, that *religion* should be propagated, but that more broad acres should be given to ecclesiastics; and these prelates having sold the independence of their native country, and the birthright of their people; like most agents of of that description, were impatient for their reward. Justly thinking that their own treachery stood higher in the scale of iniquity than the open aggression of strangers, they had looked for a proportionate share of the spoil; and now when they found or imagined their merits undervalued, they assumed airs of patriotism.

Lawrence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, was the most conspicuous in this new character. After some years of ostentatious attachment to the British monarch, this prelate appeared as his accuser at the council of Lateran, supported by a deputation of five other bishops. They had sworn allegiance at Cashel, and the King suspecting their intentions, arrested their progress through England, and exacted a second oath,¹ that they would do nothing at the council prejudicial to his interests; but the ardor with which they were now inspired overcame every obstacle. Some Irish writers assert, that Lawrence obtained a revocation of the papal grant to Henry.² However that may be, it is certain that his complaints were loud and well received, 'he exerted himself,' says a contemporary,³ 'with all the zeal of his nation, for the privileges of the church, and against the King's authority;' and the Pope in acknowledgment of his eminent services, raised him to the dignity of apostolic legate. Thus armed with new powers of mischief, Lawrence set out for Ireland; but Henry wisely prevented his return,

¹ Lanigan, iv. 238.

² O'Sullivan Beare's Catholic History, p. 62.

³ Giraldus Cam. ut infra.

and the disappointed agitator passed the remainder of his days in Normandy. The monkish writers of his life, with that affected compassion for the misery of Irishmen, which the sad experience of so many centuries has not yet taught them to despise, gives these as his last words: ' Ah! foolish and senseless people, what will now become of you? Who will heal your sufferings? Who will relieve you?' This manifold traitor, to his church, his country, his native prince, and the sovereign of his own election, was in due season canonized, and his saintly protection is still invoked by our titular hierarchy with a publicity, which displays the unshaken constancy of the order.

Amidst the public affairs which had engaged Lawrence during his visit to Rome, he retained sufficient presence of mind to obtain from the Pope a grant, the parties calling it a *confirmation*—of most extensive possessions in lands, villages, and parishes, in the neighbourhood of Dublin. Though the firmness of the English monarch prevented the prelate himself from returning to enjoy this splendid endowment, it was all claimed, of course, by his successor. But in the mean time, Hamo de Valois, Prince John's deputy in the government, had set up a

counter-claim for some of the lands; whether in the name of his master, in his own, or in that of some ancient proprietor, does not now appear. Comyn, an Englishman, the successor of St. Lawrence, being thus excluded from possession, excommunicated De Valois, and all the other members of the administration, and not content with this vengeance upon the transgressors, laid his unoffending city and diocese under an interdict. To indicate that the passion of Christ had been renewed in the indignity offered to his minister, he caused the crucifixes of the cathedral to be laid prostrate on the ground, with crowns of thorns on the heads of the images; and one of the figures was pointed out as the miraculous representative of the suffering Redeemer; the face inflamed, the eyes dropping tears, the body bathed in sweat, and the side pouring forth blood and water. In the end, the lord deputy was obliged to yield; and as an atonement for his former injuries, made a donation of twenty plough-lands to the See of Dublin.¹

The next Archbishop of the same See, an Englishman also, was equally resolute. The

¹ Leland, i. 164. Lanigan, iv. 332. An *interdict* is a suspension of all religious rites.

clergy of Dublin having claimed some exorbitant fees under the specious title of oblations of the faithful, were opposed by the magistrates and citizens, who had just before successfully resisted a demand of the crown. An interdict upon the whole city, and special anathemas against the offending persons, were the immediate consequences of this insubordination. The people appealed to the lord-deputy, and the cause received a formal hearing before the privy council ; but here the clergy were triumphant, and their adversaries reduced to a very ludicrous composition. It was agreed that in cases of open scandal, such as that of opposition to the priesthood, a commutation in money should be made for the first offence ; that for the second the culprit should be cudgelled round the parish church ; for the third, the same discipline should be repeated publicly at the head of a procession, and if the obstinacy proceeded farther, that he should be either disfranchised or cudgelled through the city. Such were the citizens, whom the King of England had thought it necessary to pacify, by an apology for his conduct and a promise of redress of grievances.¹

¹ Leland, i. 237.

The following anecdote of the contemporary bishop of Ferns, is a graver instance of the zeal which animated the hierarchy of those days. This prelate had excommunicated the great earl of Pembroke, on the pretence that he had seized two manors belonging to his church, and upon the death of that nobleman, appeared before the king to claim restitution. Being ordered to pronounce an absolution at the earl's tomb, he attended the king thither, and with judicial solemnity, pronounced these words, ' O William, thou that liest fast bound in the chains of excommunication, if what thou hast injuriously taken away be restored, by the king, or thy heir, or any of thy friends, with competent satisfaction, I absolve thee. Otherwise I ratify the sentence, that, being bound in thy sins, *thou mayest remain damned in hell for ever.*' The heir would not surrender the disputed manors, and the bishop confirmed his malediction. Some time after, the male line of the family having become extinct, it was carefully pointed out, to the common people, how the curse of God had followed the imprecation of his minister.

Hitherto we have seen the bishops contending with their armed associates, for the spoils,

and almost over the bodies of their common victims. But time had now begun to mark out prescriptive limits to their estates ; and accordingly, henceforward other desires are gradually unfolded, and other objects engage the growing ambition of the church.

The Archbishop of Dublin, having been appointed lord justice in 1222, and about the same time legate of the holy see, employed all the power which these offices gave him, in extending the jurisdiction of the spiritual courts. The citizens, oppressed by these new tribunals, appealed to the king, Henry III., who wrote a sharp but ineffectual letter to his deputy. (*Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 55.) The civil sword was then transferred to the hands of a layman, but the clergy persevered in their career of usurpation ; and after eleven years of silent endurance, the monarch was compelled to issue a writ, which affords a striking proof of the ascendancy they had attained.

‘ The King, to his Earls, Barons, Knights, Freemen, and all others of his land of Ireland, greeting: whereas it is clearly known to be contrary to our crown and dignity, and to the laws and customs of our kingdom of England, which our Father, King John of worthy memory

established in said land, that pleas should be held in court Christian, touching the advowsons of churches and chapels, or lay fee, or chattels, unless such as may accrue from wills or marriages; we therefore straitly charge you, that you by no means presume to sue such pleas aforesaid in court Christian, to the manifest prejudice of our crown and dignity; and we give you to know for certain, that we have enjoined our chief justice of Ireland, to enforce the statutes of our courts of England against all transgressors of this our mandate, and to execute whatsoever pertaineth to us in this matter.' (Cox, p. 62.)

The king, it would seem, was afraid to provoke the prelates, by opposing himself directly to their aggressions. He upheld his dignity as well as he dared, by attacking them through his nobles, knights, and freemen, who were thus not only worried by an arrogant priesthood, but upbraided by a feeble prince, for 'presuming' to submit to a power which held the throne itself in vassalage.

The annals of the following reign have preserved a curious petition of a widow in 1276. Margaret le Blunde of Cashel, petitions our Lord the King's grace, that she may have her

inheritance which she recovered at Clonmel, before the king's judges, against David Mac Carwell, bishop of Cashel. *Item*, for the imprisonment of her grandfather and grandmother whom he shut up and detained in prison until they perished by famine, because they sought redress for the death of their son, father of your petitioner, who had been killed by said bishop. *Item*, for the death of her six brothers and sisters, who were starved by said bishop, because he had their inheritance in his hands, at the time he killed their father. It is to be noted that the said bishop has built an abbey in the city of Cashel, which he fills with robbers, who murder the English, and lay waste the country; and that when our Lord the king's counsel examine into such offences, he passes sentence of excommunication upon them. *Item*, it is to be noted, that the said Margaret has five times crossed the Irish Sea. Wherefore she petitions for God's sake, that the king's grace will have compassion, and that she may be permitted to take possession of her inheritance. It is further to be noted, that the aforesaid bishop has been guilty of the death of many other Englishmen besides her father; and that the said Margaret has many times obtained

writs of our Lord the King, but to no effect, by reason of the influence and bribery of said bishop.' (Leland, i. 234.)

If these enormities, or any approaching to such a description, could be committed by the prelates upon Englishmen, we must not be surprised at any extent of suffering which may have fallen to the lot of the native population.

King John, with more of wisdom and humanity than is discernible in his other actions, had granted to his Irish subjects a charter of the laws and usages of England, to the observance of which he bound the nobles by an oath. His son and successor, Henry the Third, confirmed this charter by a patent of the first year of his reign; eleven years after he *enforced* it, in a mandate directed 'to his *archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors*, earls, barons, knights, freeholders, and the bailiffs of his several counties.' After a second interval, of eighteen years, the monarch again addressed the same personages, but in the humble tone of supplication, 'that for the sake of peace and quietness, they would permit the English laws and customs to be observed in his land of Ireland.' But neither commands nor entreaties were found availing: the lay lords of both races pre-

ferred serfs to yeomanry, and resolved to continue the horrors of the aboriginal system. The prelates adopted a more prudent, but not more liberal course; they allowed *their own vassals* the use of the English laws, in all matters which they had not reserved to their spiritual jurisdiction; and by this measure they at once pleased the government, secured to themselves a reasonable revenue, attached their retainers, and displayed to all *the great advantage of being under the church*. But it was by no means their intention that a benefit, which was thus a sort of ecclesiastical privilege, should be vulgarized by indiscriminate enjoyments; and hence we find them as hostile as the lay nobles, to the general extension of the English usages.

In the reign of Edward the First, a few broken clans, and many smaller groups of the miserable natives, the refuse of the sword and its attendant horrors, were still lingering within the precincts of the English colonies; they were pent in those corners of their old possessions, which had not yet attracted the cupidity of the settlers, contemptuously tolerated in their ancient usages, but excluded from all the benefits of English law and government.

Few situations could be more forlorn. On the one hand their original polity, which was so exceedingly simple, that the members of the same tribe had perhaps no civil relation to each other, except their common attraction to one chief, had crumbled away, as this central power was removed or weakened, and left them nearly if not entirely in a state of nature; on the other, if they were not acknowledged as the king's subjects, the king's courts were not open to them, and if the blood of a father or brother were shed, his assassin had only to plead that the deceased was an Irishman, and he was secure from all vengeance, but that of the Almighty. In the truce which had naturally arisen out of their weakness, and the sated thirst of conquest in their invaders, they received every day some new and mortifying proof of their own destitution, and of the manifold advantages enjoyed by Englishmen. All hope of expelling the strangers had now vanished from their minds; those feelings and circumstances which had hitherto blinded them to the defects of their Brehon code were no longer in existence, and they resolved on the experiment of an unqualified submission. They made up a purse of eight thousand marks, which they

tendered to the king through his Irish governor, with a request that he would receive them, as his faithful liegemen, and take them under the protection of the laws of England. Nothing can so well illustrate their broken-hearted wretchedness as this mode of preferring the petition. A measure so just in itself, so fair in its prospects, so full of glory to the prince who might condescend to adopt it, was not even to be thought of by the suppliants unless, like too many of their unhappy posterity, they should approach the seat of justice with a bribe. The king's answer deserves to be given in full :—

‘ Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitain, to our trusty and well-beloved Robert de Ufford, Lord Justice of Ireland, greeting—

‘ The improvement of the state and peace of our land of Ireland, signified to us by your letter, gives us exceeding joy. We entirely commend your diligence, hoping that, by the divine assistance, the things begun so happily by you shall, as far as in you lieth, be still further prosecuted with the greater vigour and success.

‘ And whereas the Irish commonalty have made a tender to us of eight thousand marks,

on condition that we grant them the laws of England to be used in the aforesaid land; we wish you to know that inasmuch as the Irish laws are hateful to God and repugnant to justice, it seems expedient to us, and our council, to grant them the laws of England; provided always that the general consent of our people, or at least of our prelates and nobles of said land, do concur in this behalf.

‘We therefore command you, that having entered into treaty with this commonalty, and inquired diligently into the will of our people, prelates, and nobles, in this matter: *and having agreed upon the largest fine of money that you can obtain to be paid to us on this account*, you make with the consent of all aforesaid, or at least of the greater and sounder part thereof, such a composition touching the premises, as you shall judge in your discretion to be most expedient for our honour and interest. Provided also that said commonalty shall hold in readiness a body of good and stout footmen, amounting to such a number as you shall agree upon, for one campaign only, to repair to us, as we may see fit to demand them.’

In reply to this letter, Ufford stated that the time was unsuitable, the greater number of the

barons being absent from the seat of government, upon the business of the state, or the defence of their lands, and that many of the others were minors ; that it would therefore be impossible to collect an assembly sufficiently numerous or respectable for so grave a deliberation. But the Irish renewed their affecting appeal, and the king issued a fresh mandate, inquiring ‘whether or not we can make such grant without loss and prejudice to your liberties and customs.’—Given at Westminster, Sept. 10, 1280.

Here was offered to the church one of those invaluable opportunities of repentance, by which the benignant wisdom of providence will sometimes extract a blessing from the greatest transgressions. The king had declared in his first letter, that he would be guided by the opinion of his prelates and nobles ; and in his second, that notwithstanding the inevitable absence of most of the latter, the assembling of the council should by no means be deferred. Thus the ecclesiastical members, bishops, abbots, and priors, would have easily commanded a very decisive majority.¹ Ireland was therefore once

¹ It would seem that in those days the spiritual Lords outnumbered the whole body of their lay peers.—SPENSER.

more at the mercy of its prelates ; they might now, by a vote, have almost atoned for the original baseness of their predecessors, and arrested the bloody progress of centuries of desolation. But the canon law was the only code which they desired to establish generally, and the law of England was even then too favourable to liberty, not to be viewed with alarm by men who aimed at despotic power. On the one hand they wished for a continuance of the inequality between the races of English and Irish men ; because in fact it was only a gradation of servitude, and kept the ascendancy of the church upon a higher pedestal. On the other, they could not tolerate a measure which, by diffusing through all classes a spirit of spontaneous attachment to the state, might diminish their own political importance ; there was to be no loyalty of which they were not the mediators ; and while overt acts of rebellion were occasionally restrained, a spirit was to be kept alive which would render their constant interference indispensable. It cannot be ascertained from any authentic record, whether this council ever met. One thing only is certain, that the bishops defeated the good intentions of the king, and closed their ears to the groans

of their countrymen. It deserves to be added, that about fifty years after, these Irish outcasts petitioned again for *naturalization* in their native soil, and that their application was evaded by nearly the same devices.

A century and a half had now passed away without the realization of those ambitious hopes which had allured the sanguine perfidy of St. Laurence and his cotemporaries. These hopes had been transmitted in regular descent, and with increasing bitterness of disappointment to every new succession of the Irish clergy, and a slight which they might have anticipated, but for which it does not appear that they were at all prepared, was gradually kindling a spirit of seditious discontent. The courts of Rome and England, justly suspicious of men who, however useful as instruments for acquiring dominion, had shown that they could not be entrusted with its preservation, had from the beginning, concurred in a plan for weakening the Irish ecclesiastical interest; a few of the most important sees, of the richest abbacies and probably of the inferior dignities in the church, being always filled by Englishmen. Fifteen years after the landing of an English governor, the jealousies occasioned by this questionable policy

burst out in the Synod of Dublin into mutual invectives ; and as the cause of these jealousies was never removed, time strengthened the animosity of the Irish. In the year 1250 the native prelates agreed to a regulation, that no clerk of the English nation should be received into a canonicate in any of their churches : the royal authority was exerted in vain to change this bold resolve, and some time had elapsed before the united influence of the crown and the tiara could extort a sullen retraction. But although the vexation of the Irish ecclesiastics flamed out thus from time to time, the many solid advantages they had obtained, and the continued want of English protection to shelter them from the vengeance of their betrayed countrymen, combined to teach them the necessity of dissimulation. Trusting to time and their skill in intrigue for the final accomplishment of their designs, they continued to assist against the *common enemy* with their counsels, their anathemas, and when induced by sufficient remittances from the exchequer, with their military talents.

At length in the reign of Edward the Second, the invasion and partial success of Edward Bruce, in 1315, revived the ancient spirit of

the order ; and their smothered rage exploded in the design of a new revolution. Those evils which the prelates of the last reign would not allow their monarch to remedy, were now converted into arguments against the government of his successor ; and church policy shewed the versatility of its genius by re-assuming the mask of patriotism. With the usual bad faith of pampered mercenaries, a multitude of ecclesiastics, both prelates and inferior clergy, revolted to the insurgent chieftains. They denounced the English as enemies to the church and oppressors of the nation ; they exhorted the populace to flock to the banner of Bruce : a prince they said, of the ancient line of Milesian monarchs, and the chosen instrument of their common deliverance ; and with that vain glorious impatience of prosperity which has always frustrated their most promising attempts, they formally crowned the adventurer, king of Ireland.¹

In the next reign (Henry VII) 1486, the divided state of public opinion between the rival houses of York and Lancaster revived the

¹ Leland i. 271. The ceremony of the coronation was performed at Dundalk within the English pale. Spenser says he *reigned* for a whole year.

restless ambition of the hierarchy ; and encouraged them to appear once more in open rebellion against the united authority of pope and king. The title of the reigning prince had been confirmed by the pontiff, with the severest denunciations against all gainsayers ; his Irish government had been conducted in a moderate and conciliating spirit ; yet all the bishops except four, English and Irish indiscriminately, with a proportionate number of the clergy, joined in the conspiracy which was formed to depose him, and to place a boy of mean extraction upon the throne of the Plantagenets.

The stripling Simnel, the creature of an obscure Oxford ecclesiastic, was received by these prelates with an extravagant affectation of loyal zeal. Upon his arrival in Dublin, he was conducted in state to the cathedral of Christ Church : the bishop of Meath, in a bold discourse from the pulpit, explained and enforced his right to the throne ; and a crown taken from a statue of the Virgin in the church of St. Mary les Dames, was placed upon his head, amidst the acclamations of a deluded populace.

When the bishops had thus carried their treason to the last extremity, they began to

be visited with the same misgivings which had disturbed their predecessors in the time of Edward Bruce. To influence the councils, or at least soften the resentment, of the Vatican, they assembled a convocation, and caused a subsidy to be voted to the Holy Father. Whether the grant was intended as the purchase of an absolution from the impending censures, or as a substantial proof, that however they might have erred in the choice of a subordinate ruler, they had not swerved from their fealty to the supreme lord of their order and their country, it is now impossible to determine; but whatever might have been its purpose, Rome stood firm to her own dignity, and the claims of her faithful vassal. A bull was directed to the four prelates who had not leagued in the rebellion, commanding them to excommunicate their offending brethren; and the delinquents would have experienced the utmost severity of papal vengeance, had not the monarch declared his willingness to admit them to pardon, upon the easy terms of acknowledging their fault, and renewing their oaths of allegiance. Sir Richard Edgecumbe, the officer sent over by the king to receive the submission of the lords and prelates of the pale,

has left us copies of the oaths which were taken on the occasion; they were 'devised by himself as sure as he could,' and cost him the labour of many days, in the discussion of the several articles with those refractory penitents.

The oath of the lay lords is on the model of the old oath of a feudal vassal; with a clause at the end, that the party *'will not let, nor cause to be letted, the execution and declaration of the great censures of holy Church, to be done agenst any person of what estate, degree, or condition he be, by any archbishopp, bishopp, &c. according to the authority of our most holy father Pope Innocent the Eighth, that now is, agenst all theme of the king's subjects, that lett or trouble our sayd sovereign Lord King Henry the Seventh.'* The same pledges were exacted of the bishops, with an additional declaration, that *'as oft as they should be required, they would execute the censures of the Church, on behalf of their sovereign Lord, agenst all those of his subjects, of what dignity, degree, state, or condition he be, that letteth or troubleth their seyde sovereign lord.'*

The attempt made to elude the force of these oaths, is a strong instance of that detestable casuistry by which the schoolmen of the Church

of Rome have seared the natural susceptibility of conscience. When at length every difficulty appeared to be adjusted, it was demanded by Kildare, the leader of the rebellion, that the host on which they were to be sworn should be consecrated by one of his own chaplains. This demand involved literally a *mystery of iniquity*, which the rude proposer could never have fathomed for himself, and which few Roman Catholic laymen of the present day will be able to comprehend without a particular explanation.

It has long been a doctrine of the papal Church, re-published at Trent under the sanction of a curse upon all who deny it, that the intention of the officiating priest is necessary for the validity of a religious rite. The conspirators were assured that the intention of Kildare's chaplain would be cordially in their favour; thus the form of consecration would be the juggling illusion of a mountebank; the wafer would be no host: and the protestation made upon it, 'so help me *this* holy Sacrament of God's body, in form of bread *here present*, to my salvation or damnation,' however awful in its terms, would have no meaning, and consequently no terrors to those whom the pre-

lates should initiate into so comfortable a secret. But Edgecumbe was aware of the perfidy of the demand; he insisted that the mass should be celebrated by his own chaplain: and has left us a description of the whole ceremony, which shows the appalling character of the meditated prevarication. ‘*This done,*’ he says, ‘*the seyd erle went into a chamber where the seyd Sir Richard’s chaplain was at masse, and in the masse time, the seyd erle was shriven and assoiled from the curse that he stood in, by the virtue of the Pope’s bull; and before the agnus of the seyd masse, the host being divided into three parts, the priest turned him from the altar, holding the said three parts of the host, upon the patten: and there in the presence of many persons, the seyd erle, holding his right hand over the holy host, made his solemn oath of legiance unto our soverain lord King Henry the Seventh, in souch forms as was afore devised, and in like wise the bishops and lordes made like oath; and that done, and the masse ended, the seyd erle, with the seyd Sir Richard, bishopps, and lordes, went into the church of the seyd monastery, and in the choir thereof, the Archbishopp of Dublyn began Te Deum, and the choir with*

the organs sung it up solemnly, and all the bells in the church rung.'

But the bishops, though frustrated in this device, had another evasion in reserve the benefits of which did not extend to their lay associates. The oath of the latter was absolute, concluding in the manner already quoted, 'so help me this holy sacrament,' &c., but in that of the prelates, these words were followed by a sweeping clause of exceptions, 'salvo ordine episcopali,' saving the privileges of their order: privileges of which themselves were the only judges, and before the sacred inviolability of which all secular rights and secular obligations were required to give way.

CHAPTER V.

Outlines of the history of the Reformation—The whole island embraces Protestantism in the reign of Elizabeth—The testimonies of Carte, Barrington, Leland, and Phelan, to the above fact—Again withdraws from the church—The causes of this remarkable revolution—The confiscation of the lands of the regular clergy—Partial confiscation of the property of the secular clergy—The order, habit, and language of the Irish abolished—The wretched state of spiritual destitution of the church at, and after the Reformation—The poverty of the Irish clergy—The testimony of Spencer—Carte's letter of King James I.—Carte's description of the church under Charles I.—Address of Convocation—Wentworth's state Letters—Primate Boulter's Letters—Tythe of Agistment—State of the Church for the last fifty years.

No sooner had Henry VIII. asserted his claim to the complete sovereignty of Ireland than all the nobles arrayed themselves on the side of the crown; they abolished the subordinate title of *lord*, the only one which the pope had permitted to be assumed, and proclaimed him King of Ireland, and SUPREME HEAD OF THE CHURCH. This unanimity was not confined to that body of the nobility which conformed to the English customs, and which usually took a share in the

administration of public affairs. Those powerful and refractory chieftains, who had hitherto maintained a dubious struggle against the utmost force of the state, came forward on this occasion, with rival zeal for the honour of royalty, and with the strongest professions of their undivided allegiance. Desmond was the first who presented himself; on the 16th of January 1540, he executed a written indenture, in which he 'utterly denied, and promised to forsake, the usurped primacy and authority of the Bishop of Rome, and engaged to resist and repress the same; and all that should by any means uphold or maintain it.' Shortly after, O'Connor, and O'Dunne, gave similar pledges. O'Donnel, in his indenture, bearing date the 6th of August, 1542, declares that, 'he will renounce, relinquish, and to the best of his power annihilate, the usurped authority of the Roman pontiff; that he will by no means harbour or allow in this country those who adhere to the said pontiff, but will with all diligence, expel, eject, and eradicate them, or bring them into subjection to our said lord the king.' His example was followed in a week after by MacMahon. In the January following, O'Neil, the acknowledged leader of the northern Irish,

met the king's commissioners at Maynooth, and entered into similar engagements; and in the course of that year the same plan was pursued by O'Brien, the first chieftain of Munster; by O'More, O'Rourke, MacDonnel, and by the head of the De Burgos, who was then known by the Irish title of MacWilliam.

The conduct of the great lords was emulously imitated by those of inferior rank. From Connaught, Meath, and the remotest regions of the north and south, all the most turbulent heads of the Irish tribes, as well as all those of the old English race, who had adopted Irish manners, and lived for ages in rude independence, vied with each other in declarations of fidelity to the king, and executed their indentures in the amplest forms of submission.

Appearances were still more favourable in the reign of queen Elizabeth. The whole body of the Romish priests abandoned their connexion with Rome, and adopted the liturgy of the Church of Ireland, and the entire mass of the population outwardly conformed to the ritual of our established church; in short, that the whole island did actually profess Protestantism in the time of Elizabeth, is a fact as certain as any other in the records of history.

The problem now to be solved, is, how, with this fact before us, (namely, that the population of Ireland did at one period since the Reformation, conform to the ritual of a Protestant church) that same population should have again merged into the mass of error which constitutes the essence of the Church of Rome? We shall first endeavour to prove the truth of what has been advanced, and then proceed to develop the causes that have led to so melancholy a result.

Carte thus alludes to the fact. ‘ In the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, the Roman Catholics, universally throughout England, observed the act of uniformity, and went to the parish churches, where the English liturgy was constantly used. They continued doing so for eleven years. The case was much the same in Ireland, where the bishops complied with the reformation, and the Roman Catholics in general resorted to the parish churches, in which the English service was used, until the end of Queen Elizabeth’s reign. But swarms of Jesuits and priests educated in the seminaries founded by King Philip II. in Spain, and the Netherlands, and by the Cardinal of Lorraine, in Champagne, (where, pur-

suant to the views of the founders, they sucked in, as well the principles of rebellion as of what they called Catholicity,) coming over into that kingdom, as full of secular as of religious views, they soon prevailed with an ignorant and credulous people to withdraw from the public service of the church.'

Barrington, a Popish Bishop, thus expresses himself. 'For some time the great body of the (Roman Catholic) clergy, conformed exteriorly to the law. It was afterwards more than once publicly declared by Sir Edward Coke, when Attorney-general, which the queen herself confirmed in a letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, that for the first two years of her reign, the Roman Catholics, without doubt or scruple, repaired to the parish churches: the assertion is true, if not too generally applied. 'I deny not,' says Father Parsons, in reply to Coke, 'but that many throughout the realm, though otherwise Catholics in heart, as most of them were, did at that time, and after, as also now, (A. D. 1606,) either from fear or lack of better instruction, or both, repair to Protestant churches.'

Leland, in reference to the subject, says, 'However the foreign clergy and Popish emis-

saries might have encouraged the people to repine at the penal laws ; yet it is certain, and acknowledged by writers of the Romish communion, when it serves the purpose of their argument, that these laws were not executed with rigour in the reign of Elizabeth. The act which enforced attendance at the reformed worship, under the penalty of one shilling on the absentee, met with a general compliance from the Papists in England, until the excommunication of the queen, and the industry of the Jesuits, created numbers of recusants. In Ireland, the remonstrants of 1644 contended that it was not at all executed in this reign. Their answerers assign a reason, because there were no recusants, ‘ AS ALL THE ROMISH COMMUNION RESORTED TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCHES.’ The following passage from Phelan strongly corroborates what has been already stated by Protestant and Romish authors. ‘ For eleven years the measures of the queen were unmolested by the Papal government, and received without opposition by the great body of the Roman Catholics. The laity every where frequented the churches ; multitudes of the priests adopted the prescribed changes, and continued to officiate in their former cures.

And the majority of the prelates leading or following the popular opinion, retained their sees, and exercised their functions according to the reformed ritual. At length the patience of Rome was exhausted, and that spiritual sword unsheathed against these countries, which, as it would appear, is never to be returned into the scabbard. Elizabeth was excommunicated, and her subjects absolved from their allegiance, by four successive popes. Her life was assailed by numerous conspiracies; her kingdom given up to the vengeance of Spain, (at that time the greatest power on the continent,) and to the more mischievous intrigues of the new order of Jesuits.'

Thus the fact of the Reformation having been generally received in Ireland by the nobles, priests, and people, seems to be as fully proved as any other in history. The bishops and priests of the Church of Rome all outwardly conformed; they freely substituted the common prayer for the missal, and English service for a Latin mass. They could then discover no heresy in our book of prayer, and nothing damnable in our public service: but a new light flashed upon them from Rome, and after many years' conformity, they withdrew from our church.

‘ The court of Rome at this period possessed in the order of Jesuits, the most accomplished political intriguants of the day. There was many a master-mind among the members of that extraordinary fraternity. The most exquisite and refined subtlety, the most brilliant and attractive talents, the most accomplished spirit of intrigue and diplomacy, combined with all the power that religious genius and wealth could confer, were the attributes of a body which flung itself, with all the passion of a desperate fidelity, into the service of the court of Rome. They were found in the palace, and in the hovel; in the camp, and in the hall, leading the song of the revel to-night, and joining in the hymn of the choir to-morrow, till there was no place and no circumstance in which they had not a share.’

It was from this fraternity that the court of Rome selected its agents, who were to accomplish the work of checking the reformation in both England and Ireland. While Campion and Parsons were sent into the former country, Saunders and Allan were sent into the latter. The mode in which their operations were to be conducted was to be regulated by the circumstances of each country respectively.

When those men arrived in Ireland, they found the bishops, priests, and laity, all going quietly to the services of the reformed liturgy. They had made no opposition, and seem to have felt no repugnance to the perfect changes which characterized the public services of the church. There was generally throughout the country, that external conformity which we might expect from a rude and untutored people, who knew but little, and cared still less about the forms of religion. And it therefore became necessary that these sacerdotal instigators of treason should adopt some means by which they could alienate the people from the church of Ireland, and from the authority of England, by whose power it was established.

To this end it was requisite (and they were agents not particularly scrupulous as to the means to be employed) that they should act on the ignorance, the superstition, the religious prejudices and national antipathies of the people, against every thing English, as associated with religious debasement and national conquest. They therefore traversed the land, preaching that Elizabeth was excommunicated and deposed, and that all her ordinances, whether civil or ecclesiastical, were invalid as

the acts of an heretical person. The equipment of the armada was then in contemplation, to constrain England from without; an insurrection in Ireland was in considerable forwardness to weaken her power within; while factions and intrigues were rife in England, through the agency of Campion and Parsons. While the political horizon was thus darkened, these men conducted their measures among the Irish priests with success, and produced, what in those dark times was deemed equally authoritative with the law of God,—the papal bull for the formal excommunication and deposition of the queen. Hatred to England as an invader, and hatred to Protestantism as a heresy, now burst forth and spread like wild-fire through the length and breadth of the land.

The real object of these intrigues was to depose Elizabeth, and thereby bring these realms under the dominion and within the grasp of the pope; thus preparing the way for the effectual subversion of the Reformation in these countries. The Desmonds* were in arms, the

* We are informed by the popish historian O'Sullivan, that in the year 1575, Geraldine of Desmond, plotting an insurrection upon a grand scale, was desirous to concert his measures with pope Gregory, and proceeded to Rome for that purpose. He found there Cornelius O'Melrian, an Irish Franciscan, who had

cry of battle was heard in all the deep recesses of Ireland, the clans were gathered under their respective chiefs, and a war of extermination proclaimed in all her borders.

His holiness the pope was not a particle less unprincipled in the motives which he held forth for the encouragement of rebellion. He thus addresses himself to the rebels, A. D. 1575. 'We exhort all and singular of you, *by the bowels of the compassion of God*, that discerning the seasonableness of this opportunity, you will each, according to his power, aid the piety and valour of this noble general (James Geraldine, the leader of the rebel army) and fear not a woman, who, being long since bound with a chain of anathema, and growing more and more vile every day, has departed from the Lord, and the Lord from her; and many disasters will deservedly come upon her: and that you may

been recently appointed Bishop of Killaloe, and who at once became a principal in the councils of Desmond. To their united solicitations for assistance, his holiness readily consented, and granted to the BANDITTI, then desolating Italy, a free pardon, on condition of their undertaking an expedition to Ireland. At the head of these *missionaries*, the Bishop of Killaloe landed in Ireland; distributed arms and indulgences among the rebels who flocked to his standard, and inscribed upon his banners the device of the keys, 'because he fought for Him who had the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'

do this with the greater alacrity, we grant to all and singular of you, who, being contrite and confessing, shall follow the said general, and join themselves to his army in maintaining and defending the catholic faith; or shall forward his purpose by council, arms, provisions, or any other means—A PLENARY INDULGENCE OF ALL THEIR SINS, &c.”

Here was encouragement to rebellion with a vengeance! ‘*A plenary indulgence of all sin,*’ to all those who should assist in this atrocious treason by arms or ‘*any other means;*’ and while this bull appeals to the gross ignorance and superstition of the people, the next alludes to another motive, namely, hatred to the English, A. D. 1580: ‘Whereas by our letters of former years, we exhorted you that *for the purpose of recovering your liberty*, and maintaining it against the heretics, you would join with James Geraldine of happy memory, who strove zealously *to shake off from you the yoke of the English*—(the deserters from the holy Roman church) and whereas, that you may more vigorously second him in his efforts against your enemies, and the enemies of God, we granted unto all who, confessing and being contrite,

should join his army, *the plenary remission of all their sins.*' &c.

Again, his holiness writes to the rebel O'Neil, A. D. 1601, after he had accomplished the treason thus consecrated by the pope, 'We have derived great joy from these tidings, and have given thanks to God, the Father of mercies, who has still left in Ireland many thousands of men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. For these have not gone after impious heresies, or profane novelties, but have fought manfully in detestation of them, *for the inheritance of their fathers*, for the preservation of the faith, for the maintenance of unity with the one catholic and apostolic church, out of which there is no salvation.' Now the motive to which the appeal is here made, is to the national antipathies and prejudices of the people, to all the worst passions of mankind. It was to these feelings, which rankled in the hearts of the people; these antipathies against England which arose from association of ideas connected with conquest and national dishonour—it was to these, combined with the absolution from all sin, that the pope appealed, when dealing with one class, while all his motives were connected exclu-

sively with religion, when dealing with the other.

Such were the measures employed to subvert the reformation in Ireland—rebellion, treason, and blood. The popish priests were the movers and instigators of all this mass of crime,—the people were, and still are, the unhappy victims, and just as the work of the gospel was then stifled by the ignorant prejudices and national hatred to England, its laws and its religion, so the work is still restrained by the same means and the same parties. The priests still excite the worst passions of their deluded followers against England, and awaken every motive of hatred against all that emanates from the sister land.

In pursuing the history of these times, two of the most extraordinary circumstances have been brought before us that can well be imagined; we have seen all the aristocracy of the country coming forward as one man, in proclaiming Henry VIII. king of Ireland, and supreme head of the church; and in the most solemn manner ‘agree, consent, and engage, jointly and separately for themselves, their heirs, tenants, and followers, that they will hold and perform all and singular articles,

pledges, and conditions, which are contained on their part in said indenture.'

' They, and each of them, do and doth acknowledge the king's majesty aforesaid, to be their natural and liege lord ; and will honour, obey, and serve him, and the kings his successors, against all creatures of the universe. And they will accept and hold his said majesty, and the kings his successors, *as the supreme head on earth, immediately under Christ, of the Church of England and Ireland, &c.* And as far as lieth in their power, jointly and separately, they will annihilate the usurped primacy and authority of the bishop of Rome, and will expel and eradicate all his favourers, abettors and partizans, and maintain, support, and defend all persons spiritual and temporal, who shall be promoted to church benefices or dignities by the king's majesty or other rightful patron ; and will apprehend and bring to justice, to be tried according to the laws made, or to be made in such behalf, all who apply for provision to the bishop of Rome, or who betake themselves to Rome in quest of promotion.*

And in Queen Elizabeth's day, the laity are everywhere found frequenting the parish

* Cox, 272, quoting from the council book at Dublin Castle.

churches; multitudes of the priests adopting the prescribed changes, and the majority of the prelates, leading or following the popular opinion, retaining their sees, and exercising their functions according to the reformed ritual. And again, after a period of nearly thirty years of continued opposition to Rome, the whole body of the people, at the instigation of the Jesuits, return to the Romish Church, having imbibed the most rancorous hatred to England, and the ordinances of the reformed religion. How can all this be accounted for? Perhaps after what has been alleged, it might reasonably be expected, when answering this question, we should throw the whole blame of this unexpected relapse into Popery upon the Jesuits, assisted and directed as they were by the powers of Rome, whose energies seem to have been then, (as they are now) concentrated upon what they conceived, the true interests of Ireland. But candour obliges us to acknowledge that all their efforts, thus aided and supported, would have fallen powerless before the power of truth, and the armour of righteousness, had not the wretched policy of England fatally combined with the plans of her enemies, to arrest the progress of

the Reformation. An act passed in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Henry VIII. chap. xv, entitled 'An act for the English order, habit, and language,' &c. was the first heavy blow which the infant reformed church received; that act directed that the Irish habit and apparel should be abolished, and the peculiar form in which the Irish wore their hair should be discontinued. It provided further, that spiritual promotions should be given only to such persons as could speak the English language and none other. And that every archbishop, bishop, &c. at the time of the admission of any person to spiritual promotion, should administer an oath to the person promoted, that he would endeavour 'himself to learn, instruct, and teach the English tongue to all under his rule, cure, order, and governance; and further that he should keep, or cause to be kept, within the place, territory, or parish, where he should have rule, benefice, or promotion, *a school to learn English,*' &c.

And again, in an act of uniformity passed by Queen Elizabeth, the preamble runs thus:—
'And forasmuch as in most places of this realm, there cannot be found English ministers to serve in the churches or places appointed for

common prayer, and that if some good means were provided, that they might use the prayers, &c. in *such* language as they might *best understand*, the due honour of God should be thereby much advanced; and for that, also, THAT THE SAME MAY NOT BE IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE; we do therefore most humbly beseech your majesty, that it may be enacted by the authority of the present parliament, that in every such church, where the common minister hath *not* the use of the English tongue, it shall be lawful to say or use all their common and open prayer in the LATIN tongue.' Which was accordingly enacted by the statute, 2nd of Elizabeth, cap. xiii. anno. 1559—60.*

* 'In the reign of Elizabeth, the reformed liturgy was again enforced, and the English act of uniformity was enacted by the colonial parliament; and what seems a *solecism* in the history of legislation in the body of this act, by which the use of the English liturgy, and a strict conformity to it, are enjoined under severe penalties;—a clause is introduced, reciting that English ministers cannot be found to serve in Irish churches; that the Irish people did not understand the English tongue; that the church service cannot be celebrated in Irish, as well for difficulty to get it printed, as that few in the whole realm can read. *And what is the remedy?* If the ministers of the Gospel cannot speak English, he may celebrate the church service in the Latin tongue, a language certainly as unintelligible to his congregation as the English tongue, and probably not very familiar to the ministers thus authorized to use it.'—*Lord Clare's Speech on the Union.*

Had the great enemy of truth been the concoctor and passer of these parliamentary and royal enactments, no surer method could have been devised to arrest at once the progress of the Reformation in a country, whose prejudices, feelings, and best interests were thus alike insulted. The interfering with non-essential customs, which long habit had made a second nature, would of itself have unsheathed the sword of resistance in the hands of a half-civilized and enthusiastic people. But as if this were not enough, every avenue of light and knowledge, under the withering statute-book of England, was at once closed up by their being deprived of instruction in their *native language*, and either the *hateful* English, or the equally unintelligible Latin being substituted in its place.

Can we suppose any thing less than judicial blindness to have prompted measures calculated at once to exasperate prejudice, and to involve in midnight darkness a people wedded to their own customs, and fond to excess of their own language? One generation of professing (but alas uninstructed) Protestants passed away, and another succeeded, brought up in a state of greater ignorance and spiritual

destitution than their Romish forefathers, deprived of all means of grace, and stung to the quick by the dishonour cast upon their national dress and language. Can we then wonder at the effects produced? effects which England too justly feels the bitterness of even at the present day.

For so far in the history, the iron hand of power had been stretched forth, unfurling proclamations as subversive of the true principles of policy, as they were of the true principles of the Reformation.

We have now to trace the work of destruction as exhibited against the temporalities of the church in Ireland, begun in the reign of Henry VIII., carried on in the reigns of his successors, and completed first by the act of the house of commons relating to the tythe of agistment; and secondly, in our day, by the wholesale spoliation of church property under whig government, in defiance of vested rights, and of the provisions of the act of union, and the solemn engagements to the contrary, entered into by the Romish members of the house of Commons on their admission to its privileges. But to proceed in proof of these assertions. The declaration of the king's su-

premacý in the reign of Henry VIII., was accompanied by the confiscation of the lands of the monastic orders. This plunder of the regular clergy by the crown, and the transfer thereof to English lords and commoners, to the utter impoverishment of Irish vicarages, was subsequently and readily imitated by the Irish lords and English settlers, in the wholesale plunder of the secular clergy; leaving the church in such a state of destitution as must effectually have palsied its efforts for any useful or beneficial purpose.

But it has been so frequently asserted of late years, in contradiction to what has been now stated, that the reformed church has been, and is, an extravagantly endowed one in Ireland, and that its admitted failure in converting the natives from the errors of Romanism has been mainly attributable to its excessive wealth, and to the consequent indolence and neglect of its pastors; and that the remedy for these evils, is to curtail its wealth, and to diffuse its redundancy through other more wholesome channels, that it will be necessary to state from historical documents of unquestionable authority, the falsity of this opinion, which I not only hope to do, but also to show, that contrary to the

generally prevailing belief, one, and that of itself a sufficient cause of the failure of the Reformation in Ireland, has been the state of extreme poverty and destitution, in which that church existed from its first establishment, to a period of, I might almost add, recent date: and that independently of this, and other alleged causes for the failure of the Reformation in Ireland, means highly improper and injudicious were resorted to on the introduction of the reformed religion into this country; namely, the selection of individuals to carry it forward, disqualified by character, and want of information, for the great work assigned to them. If we add to this the unpreparedness of the natives and settlers, both by their habits of life and want of education, to receive instruction, and above all, that the language of their affections, the only language in which *they could think*, was as before stated, not only neglected, but it may be said, forbidden to be used as a vehicle of religious instruction; can we wonder at the melancholy spectacle which the history of this country presents to our view, and of the consequences that followed a policy so unfeeling and so pernicious. And yet if none of these circumstances had impeded the progress of truth,

the long and desolating wars of Elizabeth. The protracted and ruinous rebellion of 1641, fomented and sustained by the Jesuits, and the civil contests consequent on the revolution of 1688, together with endless proscriptions and confiscations, would have formed a barrier to its progress, which no effort on the part of the reformed clergy could have broken down, had they even been fully competent to the work assigned to them.

I shall now endeavour, as briefly as possible, to bring forward the proofs of what has been advanced. Spenser, who passed many years in Ireland in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, draws this deplorable picture of the reformed church in that country.

‘ The fault which I find with religion is but one, but the same is universal throughout all that country, that is, that they be all Papists by their profession, but in the same so blindly and brutishly informed, that not one in a hundred knoweth any ground of religion, or any article of his faith, but can perhaps say his *Pater Noster and Ave Maria*.’ ‘ Whatever disorders you find in the Church of England, ye find these and many more; they have their particular enormities, for all Irish priests which

now enjoy the church livings, are in a manner mere laymen, and follow all kinds of husbandry and other worldly affairs; they neither read Scripture, nor preach, nor administer the communion. The clergy there, he adds, (except the grave fathers which are in high places about the state, and some few others lately planted in their new college,) are generally *bad, licentious, and disordered.*

He observes that there was a statute, by which it was enacted that ‘any Englishman of good conversation being brought to the bishop, should be nominated to a vacant living *before any Irishman*, but that though well intended, little was wrought by it, for there were not sufficient English sent over, but the most part of such as came over of themselves, are either *unlearned*, or men of *bad note*, for which they have forsaken England: or the bishop *being Irish*, rejects him, or if good, he carries a hard hand over him, so that he soon wearies of his poor living.’—And *lastly*, ‘the benefices are so mean here and of so small profit in those Irish countries, through the ill husbandry of the Irish, *that they will not yield any competent maintenance for any honest minister to live upon.*’ And then he adds, ‘Even were all this re-

dressed, what good could any minister do among *them*, who either CANNOT UNDERSTAND HIM, or will not HEAR him; or how dare any honest minister commit his safety to the hands of such neighbours, as the boldest captain dare scarcely dwell by.'

Having so far stated his opinion as to the obstacles in the way of the reformed faith, it may not be irrelevant to mention one of the means he recommended for their removal. 'In planting of religion,' he observes, 'thus much is needful to be attended to, that it be not sought forcibly to be impressed into them, with terror and sharp penalties, *as now is the manner*, but rather delivered and intimated with mildness and gentleness, so as it may not be hated before it is understood, and its professors despised and rejected.'

Such was the state of the church in the reign of Elizabeth; we shall now briefly advert to its situation in the reign of James the First.

Carte, in his life of Ormond, vol. i. p. 17, gives the following extract from king James's letter of July 8, 1609. 'He found the estate of the bishoprics in Ulster much entangled, and altogether *unprofitable* to the bishops, *partly* by the challenge which the late tempo-

ral Irish lords made to the church's patrimony within their countries, hereby to discourage all men of worth and learning, through want of maintenance, to undertake the care of those places, and to continue the people in ignorance and barbarism, the more easily to lead them into their own measures; and partly by the claims of patentees, who, under colour of abbey and escheated lands, passed by patent many of the church lands, not excepting even the scite of cathedral churches, and the places of residence of bishops, deans, and canons, to the great prejudice and decay of religion, and the frustrating his religious intent for the good government and reformation of those parts.'

'Nor were the parochial churches (continues Carte) in a better condition than the cathedrals, they had most of them been destroyed in the troubles, or fallen down for want of covering; the livings were *very small* and either kept in the bishop's hands by way of commendams and sequestrations, or else filled with ministers as *scandalous as their incomes*, so that scarce any care was taken to catechise children, or instruct others in the grounds of religion, and for years together divine service had not been used in

any parish church throughout Ulster, except in some principal towns.'

This same Carte thus describes the state of the Irish Church under Charles I. 'It was at this time in a deplorable condition, the cathedrals in many places destroyed, the parish churches nearly ruined, unroofed or unrepaired; the houses of the clergy left desolate, and their *possessions alienated during the wars and confusions of former times*,—most of the tithes had been appropriated, or sold to private persons and made lay-fees. In some dioceses there was scarce a living left *that was not farmed out to the patron, at two, three, or four pounds a year for a long time*,—three lives or one hundred years. The vicarages were for the most part stipendary, and their stipends so miserably sordid, that in the whole province of Connaught there was scarce a vicar's pension which exceeded forty shillings a-year, and in many places, they were but sixteen shillings. The bishopricks themselves, though many in number, yet but of small revenue, having the greatest part of them been depauperated in the change of religion by absolute grants and long leases, (made generally by the Popish bishops that conformed,) some of them not able to maintain a bishop.

Several were by these means reduced to fifty pounds a year; as Waterford, Kilfenora, and others, and some to five marks, as Cloyne and Kilmacduagh. And as *scandalous livings naturally make scandalous ministers*, the clergy of the Established church were generally ignorant and unlearned, loose and irregular in their lives and conversations, negligent of their cures, and very careless of observing uniformity and decency in divine worship, in a country where they were endangered on the one hand by an infinite number of obstinate recusants, and on the other hand by a shoal of factious and irregular puritans brought out of Scotland, who offered daily insults to the Established church government, and treated the rites of administering the Sacraments with insufferable contempt.' Confirmatory of this statement from Carte we subjoin the address of convocation of the clergy at the same period. 'To our dread Sovereign, Charles. The humble petition of his Highness's most loyal and devoted subjects, the archbishops, bishops, and the whole clergy of Ireland assembled in convocation, by his especial command, sheweth unto your sacred majesty, that in the whole Christian world the rural clergy have not been reduced into such

extremity of contempt and beggary as in this your Highness's kingdom, by the means of so frequent appropriations, commendams, and violent intrusions into their undoubted rights, in times of confusion, having their churches ruined, their habitations left desolate, their tithes detained, their glebes concealed, and by inevitable consequence an invincible necessity of a general non-residency imposed upon them, whereby the ordinary subject hath been left wholly destitute of all possible means to learn true piety to God, loyalty to their prince, and civility one towards another, and whereby former wars and insurrections have been occasionally both procreated and maintained,—whereas by settling a rural clergy, endowed with competency to serve God at his altar, besides the general protection of the Almighty, which it will most surely bring upon your majesty and this kingdom, barbarism and superstition will be expelled, the subject shall learn his duty to God and to his sovereign, and true religion be propagated.' &c.

In Wentworth's State Letters, we find the following statement in a letter to Laud, Vol. i. p. 187. He says, 'the reducing this kingdom to a conformity in religion with the Church of

England, is no doubt deeply set in his majesty's heart, as well in perfect zeal to God's service, *as out of other weighty reasons of state and government*, but to attempt it, before the decays of the material churches be repaired, and an able clergy be provided, were as a man going to warfare without munition or arms. The best entrance to the cure will be clearly to discover the state of the patient, which I find many ways distempered. *An unlearned clergy*, which have not so much as the outward form of churchmen ; *the churches unbuilt*, the parsonage and vicarage houses utterly ruined ; the people untaught, through the non-residency of the clergy, occasioned by the unlimited shameful number of spiritual promotions with cure of souls ; the rites and ceremonies of the church run over without all decency of habit, order, or gravity ; the possessions of the church, *to a great proportion*, in lay hands ; the bishops aliening their very principal houses and demesnes to their children and to strangers ; the schools either ill provided, ill governed, or what is worse, *applied underhand to the maintenance of popish school-masters*, &c. ' Here are divers of the clergy, whose wives and children are recusants, and there the church goes

most lamentably to wreck, and hath suffered extremely under the wicked alienations of this sort of pastors.'

'Commissions for repairs of churches,' he further says, 'are issued over the whole kingdom, and all the life shall be given to it that possibly I can: and yet it may be some hot-headed prelate may think there is no good intent to religion; but I must answer that his brain-sick zeal would work a goodly reformation surely, to force a conformity to a religion, *whereas* yet there is hardly to be found a church to receive an able minister to teach the people: I appeal to any equal-minded man, whether they or I be more in the right.'

Wentworth again writes to Laud, vol. i. p. 299. 'Just at this present, I am informed that my Lord Clanrickard hath engrossed as many parsonages and vicarages, as he hath mortgaged for 4000*l.* fine, and 80*l.* rent; but in faith have at him and all the rest of the ravens. I spare no man among them, let no man spare me. Howbeit I foresee this is so universal a disease, that I shall incur a number of men's displeasure of the best rank amongst them.' And in another letter he says, 'It is no longer since than this term, a poor vicar was restored

to an impropriation and two vicarages, usurped these thirty years and better by the Earl of Cork, and considering the usurpations upon the church have been a contagion so universally spread throughout this kingdom, as hardly can a jury be got but where a great (if not the greatest) number would feel themselves interested in the question ; *such a desolation have these wars brought upon God's portion.*'

That Wentworth and Laud were influenced in these their opinions and measures by a sincere regard for the church, and not by any special respect either for the persons or immediate interests of churchmen, will clearly appear by the following extracts from their letters. Laud, in reply to several communications from Wentworth, descriptive of the plunder practised on the church, observes, ' Nor can I answer what became of the primate and the rest of the bishops, *while the poor inferior clergy were thus oppressed*, more than this, that I ever thought it was not in their power to help it; but if it shall appear to you otherwise, and if any of them be as bad for the oppression of the church as any layman, *great pity it is* but some one or other of the chief offenders should be made a public example, and turned out of

his bishoprick ; such a course once held would do more good in Ireland than anything that hath been done there this forty years.' Vol. I. p. 156.

On the other hand we find Wentworth thus expressing himself. ' Nothing new here, except that I have in the case of the bishop of Killala, adjudged and given him possession of as much land, usurped from the see, as is worth at least 100*l.* a year.'

' I have sent for the archbishop of Cashel ; but his Grace returns, he is ill of the sciatica, and not able to travel ; *likes not, I believe, to come to a reckoning*, but I have writ his answer. In good faith, my Lord, his Grace hath beguiled me, and keeps his sixteen vicarages still, but I will roundly prepare for him a purge so soon as I see him.'

I would now advert to what Primate Boulter says on the same subject. His letters embrace a period of time from 1724 to 1739, during which, from the then almost constant absence of the Lord Lieutenant, he acted as one of the Lords justices, and in that capacity corresponded with various members of the British Government:—writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury (page 169) he says, ' A great part of our clergy have no parsonage houses, or glebes to

build them on; we have many parishes eight and ten, twelve and fourteen miles long, with perhaps only one church in them, and that often at the end of the parish. We have few market towns that supply convenient food, nor farmers that can supply the common necessities of life, so that all agree that no clergyman can live without a moderate glebe, and as there can be no hopes of getting ground of the papists without more churches and more resident clergymen, we have been framing two bills, &c.' 'In many parts, by means of impropriations, there are vicarages or curacies worth but 5*l.* or 10*l.* per annum, so that in several places the bishop lets the same person enjoy three or four on to seven or eight of these, which possibly all together make but 60*l.*, 80*l.*, or 100*l.* per annum, and there is, it may be, but one or two churches on all the *denominations*, which is the name we give these parishes.'

Again, writing to the Duke of Newcastle, (p. 179) he repeats, 'until we can get more churches and resident clergy, instead of getting ground of the papists, we must lose to them, as in fact we do in many places, *the descendants of many of Cromwell's officers and soldiers being gone off to popery.*'

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We have now arrived at that period of our Church history, in which the Irish landed proprietors, the immediate descendants of Cromwellian and Williamite dissenters, disliking the Church of England little less than popery, conspired to exempt all their grass lands from tythe, and succeeded in the attempt through the celebrated vote of the Irish House of Commons against agistment, and by that vote, (professedly adopted *for the benefit of the Protestant interest*, and compared with which, the passive resistance of modern days is of trivial criminality,) they literally abolished tithes in three-fourths at least of Ireland, and threw the clergy for support upon the oats and potatoes of the pauper farmers. It is a remarkable circumstance, that in the year 1733, a virtual suspension of the test act had taken place in favour of the dissenters, and in the very next year the Irish House of Commons, by way of offering first-fruits for this indulgence, passed the agistment vote against tithe of pasture for dry cattle; voting in fact, that two-thirds of the maintenance of the established Church should not henceforth be demanded; the difference of course was added to the rent of the landlords.' (See *Liber Munerum Public. Hiberniæ*, b. i.

p. 105.) And it is equally remarkable, that in the year 1829, the relief bill, falsely so called, was passed in favour of the Roman Catholics, and in the year 1830, the passive resistance system commenced, which reduced many of the clergy of the church of Ireland to the greatest possible destitution.

It may not be uninteresting to some of our readers, to furnish here the details of the celebrated resolutions of the Irish House of Commons in 1735, whereby they inflicted a wound not yet healed on their country, and whereby they, (one of the fountains of law and justice,) crowned that system of plunder which Wentworth so truly characterized as national, though not peculiar to Ireland.

Boulter's Bill, passed in 1728, proves that pasture was so universally prevalent in Ireland as to render it a desirable object to enforce the tillage of every twentieth acre, and from such an enactment it may fairly be inferred, that at the time not more than every fiftieth acre was actually tilled. Under such circumstances the Irish House of Commons abolished tythe of pasture, that is, they exempted ninety-six acres, at least out of every hundred, from contributing to the support of the clergy : the fatal

effects resulting from this measure, was, that it encouraged pasture, and discouraged tillage ; but above all, it relieved the rich Protestant landlords and graziers, while it threw the burden of supporting the church upon the *poor Roman Catholic farmers and cottiers*, and as a natural consequence, this measure so impoverished the benefices of the clergy, as to compel the government and the bishops, in order to relieve them, to aggravate an old evil, arising from the poverty and plunder of the church, viz. to unite several parishes, and to diminish the number of the working clergy, in order to afford a decent competence to the remainder.*

* It may be necessary to give an account of the proceedings which occasioned all the evil here mentioned. On the 5th of March 1735, the petition of Samuel Low and many others, from different parts of Ireland, complaining that the clergy have commenced suits for a new kind of tithe, under the name of agistment, for dry and barren cattle, being read—‘*Ordered*, That a committee be appointed to examine the allegations thereof, to meet to-morrow morning at 9 o’clock : five to be a committee, and that all members who come have voices.’

Report from the Committee on the petition of Samuel Low and others, in behalf of themselves, and the rest of the gentlemen, landholders in this kingdom, concerning agistment tithe, and the prosecutions instituted by the clergy thereon. March 18, 1735.

Then the house, according to order, resumed the adjourned consideration of the report of the committee appointed to take

But besides these resolutions of the Irish House of Commons in 1735, 'there were some other votes, (says Primate Boulter) ready to be passed, *one particularly* to fall on the Barons of the Exchequer, which, though they were stopped by some of that house that were wiser, yet seem to have intimidated that court almost as much as if they had passed.'

How very singular it must appear, that in the year 1836, after a lapse of a century,

into consideration the petition of Samuel Low and others, (whose names are thereunto subscribed,) in behalf of themselves and the rest of the gentlemen and landholders in this kingdom, and the rest of the report and resolutions were read as follows :

Resolved, 'That it is the opinion of this Committee that the petitioners have fully proved the allegations of their petition, to satisfaction of the Committee, and deserve the strongest assistance the house can give them.' To which resolution, the question being put, the House did agree.

Resolved, 'That the allotments, glebes, and known tythes, with other ecclesiastical emoluments, ascertained before this new demand of tythe of agistment for dry and barren cattle, are an honourable and plentiful provision for the clergy of this kingdom.'

Resolved, 'That the demand of tythe agistment for dry and barren cattle is new, grievous, and burdensome to the landlords and tenants of the kingdom, who could have no notice thereof previous to their purchases and leases, nor the least apprehensions that such unforeseen demands could have been claimed.'

A motion being made, and the question put 'That the commencing suits upon these new demands *must impair the Protestant interest* by driving many useful hands out of this kingdom, must disable those that remain to support his Majesty's establish-

scenes nearly similar should be reacted in Ireland, though by very different personages ; and that in the imperial parliament, similar censures should have been threatened against Barons of the Exchequer, though we rejoice to state, with results very different.

The anti-tithers of 1735 were the Protestant nobility and gentry, who were permitted by a feeble government to violate the law, and to intimidate the Court of Exchequer from a conscientious discharge of its duty. The anti-tithers of 1836 were the Roman Catholic priests, demagogues, and people, feebly re-

ment, and occasion popery and infidelity to gain ground, by the contest that must naturally arise between the laity and clergy.'

Noes 50. Ayes 110. It was carried in the affirmative.

Tellers for the noes, Mr. Cope and Mr. Dawson.—Tellers for the ayes, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Rochfort.

Resolved further, ' That all legal ways and means ought to be made use of to oppose all attempts that shall hereafter be framed to carry demands of tythe agistment into execution, *until a proper remedy* can be provided by the legislature.

To devise that 'proper remedy,' gave the Irish House of Commons no further trouble, until the day of its own extinction came, when, through fear of retributive justice from an imperial parliament, they insisted on a *legal* abolition of a right which their predecessors had for sixty-five years illegally destroyed, before they would consent to a final surrender of their legislative functions. The progress of the Act of Union was delayed until the Irish minister was, however reluctantly, compelled to introduce a Bill for abolishing a tythe long defunct.

sisted by a feeble government, in their lawless and active efforts to enforce a '*passive resistance*' to legal rights; furnishing at the same time the truly singular and ominous spectacle of the King's Court of Exchequer, assailed for its efficient protection of those rights, by the servants of the anti-tithers on the one hand, and by THE SERVANTS OF THE CROWN ON THE OTHER.*

We are now arrived at that period in the history of the reformed Irish church, in which it can be said that any adequate provision was made for her ministers. In consequence of the American war, the increasing agriculture of the country enabled them to assume the appearance of professional men, and to occupy that station which fitted them to minister with effect to the temporal and spiritual wants of the people; nor do we hesitate to affirm that their sphere of usefulness has increased with the means provided for their existence as an ecclesiastical body.

It is true indeed that after the many struggles which at different periods the Irish Church was destined to sustain, and which have been briefly

* Cause of the failure of the Reformation in Ireland. By William Harty, M. D. of the City of Dublin.

adverted to in the foregoing pages, that recovering from temporal pressure, she appeared like the Jewish church of old, to forget for a season the hand that fed her, and to settle down in a cold quiescent enjoyment of her increasing prosperity. It is however the pleasing task of one who has been feebly endeavouring to rescue her from much unmerited obliquy, to assert, that the remarkable revival of religion which has taken place in the established Church in Ireland within the last forty years, (a revival unparalleled, we believe it may be said, in Church history,) did not take place in consequence of external pressure, but when she was in the fullest enjoyment of her temporal blessings, and long before the war-cry was raised either against her property or her clergy : and it is the fullest conviction of those best qualified to judge, that this cry would never have been heard, had she remained basking in the sunshine of earthly prosperity, exhibiting at the same time the marks of spiritual declension.

But when it pleased God to awaken many of her ministers from this state of supineness and inactivity, and in accordance with their solemn ordination vows to ' be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all

erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word,' when not only the members of their own flocks became objects of their spiritual solicitude, but the ignorant and superstitious population around them,—when Scriptural schools were opened in their respective parishes, and above all, when the Irish tongue was made use of in many districts, as a vehicle of religious instruction ; then, and not till then, was it discovered, that her wealth was the cause of all the failure that had attended her former ministrations, as well as the fruitful source of multiplied present evils ; presenting the anomalous spectacle, of a richly endowed church, in the midst of a depressed and pauper population. It would be a pleasing task to trace more minutely the progress of the Irish Church since this revival, did it not involve details which would carry this little work far beyond the bounds prescribed. It is however a subject of regret, that it cannot be exactly ascertained what number of churches, glebe and school houses have been built within the period of the last thirty or forty years, with other facts illustrative of the self-denying zeal of the Irish clergy. Could this be done, we feel assured that many of her English opposers who have been led by false

accusations to 'take up a taunting proverb against her,' (some of whom we doubt not were honest in their opposition) would speedily retrace their steps, and rally round a church, whose claims to British sympathy and support, stand upon a basis broad as the constitution of England itself, and which if, overlooked, will involve perhaps in ruin the best and highest interests of the empire.

In Ireland, cursed as it is by the *absenteeism* of many of its *reforming* landlords, where could the distressed and helpless have found assistance, had not the clergy formed a kind of middle aristocracy in the country? The parsonages of Ireland it must be allowed ('our enemies themselves being judges,') have ever been the refuge of the poor, and where the cry of want has found its readiest access.

It has indeed pleased God to permit the spoiler to come into his vineyard, and to his all-wise permissive providence it is hoped the Irish clergy will cheerfully submit. One fourth of their income has been already forcibly taken from them, and further reduction may be made; as *good faith* does not seem particularly to mark the measures of our reforming government. But let the Roman Catholics of Ireland

remember that in all such reductions they themselves will be sufferers, we doubt not in full proportion to those so deprived of their incomes, and were it lawful to wish evil to our enemies; perhaps we could wish no greater evil to fall on them, than to see the tithes of the established church transferred to the hands of their own clergy.

Some well-disposed persons often express sentiments on this subject, which though piously intended, shew great want of reflection and common sense. They affirm that as the promises of God are made absolutely to his church, and that as the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, therefore men who believe this should feel no uneasiness regarding its temporal concerns, and should not mingle themselves up in any effort to preserve its revenues unimpaired.

Now though it is allowed in the most unserved manner, that the promises of God must stand, "that they are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus," yet as he works by means, and has nowhere promised to any particular country a continuation of even the light of his Gospel, we do maintain that it is the bounden duty of every man who feels the maintenance of the established church to be intimately connected with

the well-being of Ireland, to make every effort that prudence and wisdom can suggest, to preserve that church in its temporal as well as spiritual rights to the people.

If the maintenance of the clergy be further reduced, one consequence must follow—an inferior order of clergy will occupy our churches. Men will not go to the expense of a suitable education for their sons, to place them in a church where no decent support can be expected, and where from their habits and feelings they would be unfitted to bear the pressure and many evils of poverty ; and thus the higher grades of society at all events would be left destitute of teachers to whom they could look up with respect, and with whom they could feel the sympathies common to each, and which they hitherto experienced in intercourse with their ministers.

To enter more fully into the evils likely to result from the oppression of the clergy, and deprivation of their incomes, is, the writer thinks, unnecessary ; all that remains is to reply to an objection that may be taken against this work, namely, ‘ that every evil that has been felt, or that may be felt respecting the Irish church, has been traced to privation of income,

either at early or late periods of her history ; and that to secure her usefulness, nothing is necessary but to bestow on her suitable church revenues.' But most earnestly would the writer deprecate such a conclusion. In truth and in simplicity he has stated facts as he could collect them, to rectify misstatements and assertions that have been made regarding their temporalities and their abuse. But most fully would he state it as his deliberate belief, that no revenues, however great ; no clergy, however learned ; no external means however various or apparently efficient, could accomplish the great work of enlightening an ignorant, or ameliorating the condition of a poor population, except so far as God himself, by his directing and quickening Spirit, shall be pleased to bless them. Much, very much, no doubt, has been amiss among ourselves, and though the church in Ireland, compared with other ecclesiastical bodies, stands deservedly high, yet individually and collectively before God, must we not say, "to us belongeth shame and confusion of face."

Let it however be evident that our 'bishops and curates' are united in mind and in purpose, holding fast the pure unadulterated doctrines of the Reformation, and maintaining with firmness

her claims, as a Catholic and Apostolic church on the dutiful affections and cordial acceptance of the people. Let it be seen that our late chastenings have been the means in God's hand of awaking a spirit of deeper piety, and calling forth new energies into the work of the ministry; and that whilst we seek to be consistent *churchmen*, we do not arrogantly despise those who conscientiously differ from us, endeavouring to exercise that candour towards others which we claim for ourselves. "Let these things be in us and abound," and then indeed we may conclude that all the efforts of our enemies will be unavailing, and that we shall occupy a vantage ground from which we can view with calm and holy composure the many evils that may threaten our temporal existence, feeling assured it is but "the wind and storm fulfilling his word."

THE END.



APPENDIX.

I.

ACCORDING to Archbishop Usher, the profession and practice of Christianity in the fifth century, varied very little from that of the present established churches of England and Ireland. The use of the Holy Scriptures was recommended and enjoined as every Christian man's duty. The doctrines of purgatory and prayers for the dead were not heard of till the 12th century. The adoration of images was considered impious and abominable. Infants were baptised without the consecrated chrism, the omission of which is laid to the charge of the Irish by Archbishop Lanfranc. The celibacy of the clergy was unknown; which is proved by the fact that Pope Innocent in the 12th century sent directions to his legate to

abolish the abuse prevailing in Ireland, 'of sons and grandsons succeeding their fathers and grandfathers in their ecclesiastical benefices.' The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in both kinds to the people. The mass was nothing more than the public service of the church, and was so called even when prayers were only said without the celebration of the communion. With respect to the Liturgy, Archbishop Usher proves that there was no uniformity observed therein, but that various forms of divine service were used in divers parts of the kingdom, until the Roman use was at length brought in by Gillibert, Bishop of Limerick, in the twelfth century. In proof of his statements, Archbishop Usher quotes the authority of many of the early writers, as St. Chrysostom, Ledulius, Claudius, Bede, Abbot Jonas, Nennius, Probus, Adamnannus, and Cogitosus, who all flourished between the 4th and 12th centuries. Dr. O'Halloran an eminent Roman Catholic writer entertained similar views of the former independence of the Church of Ireland, as will appear from the following extracts;—'Bishops were recommended on every vacancy, by the clergy and laity of the diocese, to the king, who had a negative in the appoint-

ment. Bishops were appointed without consulting Rome, Bishops were multiplied at pleasure; they consecrated bishops for foreign missions, and those missions in many instances of discipline opposed the mandates of Rome,—as Columba in Scotland, Finian and Coleman in England, Columbanus in France, St. Gall in Germany,' &c. 'For more than five centuries after the death of St. Patrick, (says the same writer,) we scarce trace any vestiges of a correspondence between Rome and Ireland, and in this interval, in many instances, we find that Rome looked upon several of our missionaries with a jealous eye, for although these great immunities of the Irish Church were of the utmost consequence to the cause of Christianity, and contributed to spread its doctrines in a most rapid manner all over Europe, yet in the eleventh century when paganism was totally abolished, these powers seemed too great, and were thought to endanger the peace of the church. Councils and synods were therefore held from time to time, in order to bring the Church of Ireland to the same subordination to Rome as those of every other part of Europe.

The independent character of the Irish

clergy at this period is further confirmed by Mosheim, who speaks of them in the following highly honourable terms,—‘ That the Hibernians were lovers of learning, and distinguished themselves in those times of ignorance, by the culture of the sciences beyond all other European nations, travelling the most distant lands with a view to improve and communicate their knowledge, is a fact with which we have been long acquainted, as we see them in the most authentic records of antiquity, discharging with the highest reputation and applause the functions of Doctors in France, Germany, and Italy, both during this and the following century. But that these Hibernians were the first teachers of scholastic theology in Europe, and so early as the eighth century illustrated the doctrines of religion by the principles of philosophy, I learned but lately from the testimony of Benedict, Abbot of Aniane, in the province of Languedoc, who lived at this period, and some of whose productions are published by Baluzius in the 5th tome of his *Miscellanea* ; and he adds that the Irish, who in the eighth century were known by the name of Scots, were the only divines who refused to dishonour their reason by submitting it implicitly to the

dictates of authority. Naturally subtle and sagacious, they applied their philosophy to the illustration of the truths and doctrines of religion, a method which was almost generally abhorred and exploded in all other nations. This subtlety and sagacity enabled them to comprehend with facility the dialectic art, and their profound knowledge of the Greek language contributed materially to the same end. This made them view with contempt the pitiful compendiums of theology extracted from the fathers, and which the unlearned ecclesiastics of other countries accepted as oracles.'

II.—p. 17.

WE have a very interesting account given by a monk of St. Gall in Switzerland, an Irish monastery, of two Irish missionaries who went to France about the period, A. D. 772. It is so completely *Irish* that I cannot resist the temptation of relating it in this place.

When the illustrious Charles began to reign alone in the western parts of the world, and literature was every where almost forgotten, it happened that two Scots of Ireland came over with some British merchants to the shores of France, men incomparably skilled in human learning, and IN THE HOLY SCRIPTUR . As they produced no merchandize for sale, they used to cry out to the crowds flocking to purchase, ‘If any one is desirous of wisdom, let him come to us and receive it, for we have it to sell.’ (There is an evident allusion here to Proverbs ; and Isaiah lv.) Multitudes flocked from all parts of the country to hear them. At

last the report of their proceedings came to the ears of Charles, who sent for them, and, replete with, joy kept them both with himself. After some time, being obliged to proceed on a military expedition, he ordered one of them to remain in France, entrusting to his care a great number of boys, not only of the highest noblesse, but likewise of the middling and lower ranks of society. The other he directed to proceed to Italy, and assigned to him the monastery of St. Augustine near Pavia, that such persons as chose to do so might there resort to him for instruction.—Lanigan. III. p. 208.

III. p. 127.

FOR the purpose of extending and consolidating Romanism throughout the kingdom, a large number of monasteries were established in Ireland, immediately after the English invasion in the twelfth century. These monasteries of the Augustine, Cistercian, and Benedictine orders, were built and richly endowed by those English adventurers, who having obtained large grants of land, settled a great proportion of them, as an atonement for their sins, on these establishments. It is rather remarkable, that these richly-endowed seminaries of superstition, were generally built, either on the site, or in the immediate neighbourhood of the primitive Irish monasteries, (seminaries of learning, though poorly endowed) for the purpose, no doubt, of either eclipsing or finally destroying them. And in the present day, may we not trace, on a smaller scale, a movement of a similar kind ; for is it not obvious that the Board of

Education generally prefer establishing their schools where Scriptural ones have already existed ; and we fear with similar motives, to weaken the influence of the Established, and strengthen the hands of the Romish Church in this country. It is also a curious fact, that Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, who lived in the seventh century, states, that Innet set up schools throughout England, to *outdo* the Irish, and to break the interest of the Cul-dees in that country.

It is not perhaps generally understood, that the property bestowed upon the regular clergy of the Romish Church, including a large proportion of the tithes, has been, since the time of Henry VIII, in possession of the landed proprietors of Ireland ; in consequence of which, many parishes are left without any adequate provision for a resident clergyman. (It is however but justice to one of the best landlords, and the most truly philanthropic noblemen in Ireland, the Lord Viscount Lorton, to state, that the tithes in his possession are always conferred upon clergymen, and never expended for his own use.) Thus while the church was emancipated from Romish errors, it was at the same time deprived of all that pro-

perty, that was brought into it on the establishment of Romanism in Ireland. Some, however, may object to this statement, on the ground that tithes were a Romish impost, and introduced into Ireland at the time that the Romish yoke was imposed upon us. We can however state on the authority of Lanigan, and other Romish writers of credit, that although a great increase in the number of tithed articles took place at that period, yet that a modified system of tithes did exist in Ireland previous to the introduction of Romanism, and from the changes that have of late years been introduced, especially as it regards the tithe of agistment, we do not hesitate to assert, that they now bear a very exact proportion, (taking into account the change of times,) to the tithe system, as it existed in the primitive Irish Church.

THE END.







